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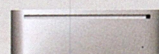
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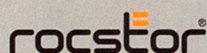
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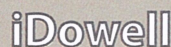
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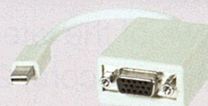
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DAVE BULLARD

Coming in from the cold

I've had an interesting start to the year. So many friends and acquaintances have been excitedly announcing their recent conversion to the Mac.

One previously PC couple even went so far as to buy an iMac, a MacBook, a MacBook Pro, two iPhones and an iPod touch! I was gobsmacked by the sheer audacity of the move, and solemnly presented them with a copy of our latest *Mac Basics Superguide 2* to help them through the transition.

There seems to have been a paradigm shift away from the concept that you are putting yourself out on a limb when dumping the PC

because most PC users are realising they can switch to the Cool Side without losing the ability to do anything they did on their PCs.

It seems that the PC is now a specialist tool, not the Mac.

Feeding time. We've been talking recently about the ways you can keep up with the goings-on at *Australian Macworld* – the magazine, website, forums and Twitter. But there's another way that many readers don't know about: the RSS feed.

For those of you who might not know what RSS is, it's a data format that takes constantly changing content from a website and presents it to you in bite-sized

google.com/reader) and Shrook (www.utsire.com/shrook). But by far the easiest way is to subscribe to a feed via your Mail application.

To get the *Australian Macworld* feed, go to our website at www.macworld.com.au and click on the white RSS link in the blue bar at the top right of the Home Page. When the RSS page comes up, click on the 'Subscribe in Mail' link at the bottom right. Et voilà! When you go to Mail, you'll see our feed in an RSS sub-menu in the sidebar.

You can also keep up while on the move by getting our news fed to your iPhone or iPod touch. Just go to the App Store and download any one of the many RSS readers available. If you're just getting started, try using the free RSS Runner, which is probably the easiest of the free apps to set up.

To add *AMW*, just click on the 'More' button at the top right, then enter the URL <http://www.macworld.com.au/content/?output=rss20>

Apple has some great RSS feeds, as you'd expect. Ones I particularly like are Apple Hot News and Top 10 Free Apps. To have a look, go to www.apple.com/rss.

D Bullard

There seems to have been a paradigm shift away from the concept that you are putting yourself out on a limb when dumping the PC in favour of a Mac."

in favour of a Mac – the computing equivalent of voting Green instead of Liberal, or exchanging your Prado for a Vespa.

Instead, now people are buying Macs and other Apple products because Macs are becoming more mainstream, because the new converts are quickly becoming evangelists for the cause, and

pieces that you can scan quickly and follow up or ignore.

So in the case of *AMW*, for example, you would get the headline and one line of text, along with a link you can click on to take you to the full story.

There are many different ways to get an RSS feed on your Mac, including Google Reader (www.

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AUSTRALIAN Macworld

2

MAC BASICS SUPERGUIDE

It's the perfect guide for those new to Macs, or those just wanting to learn more. Now the second edition of the **Mac Basics Superguide** has been completely updated for Snow Leopard – and we've added two new sections on iTunes and iLife.



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TELL IT LIKE IT IS

CONEXUS LETTER OF THE MONTH

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

When we answer our iPhones we 'swish' the 'hot' section near the bottom of the screen from Left to Right which results in a pleasing 'click' from the speaker and our caller is connected.

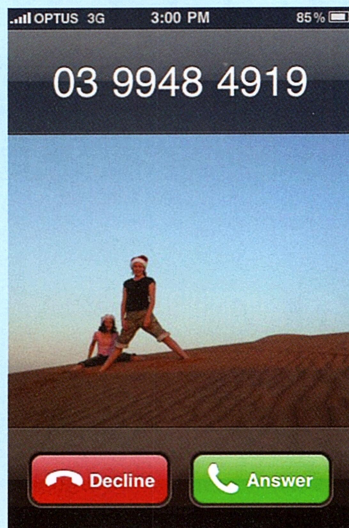
However, if we have been using the phone in another application and the phone receives an incoming call the base of the screen or 'hot' area is broken into two sections with 'Decline' on the Left and 'Answer' on the Right.

Intuition can kick in and if you react with instinct and 'swish' from Left to Right the result is a disconnected call rather than the result you are chasing.

Given a percentage of the planet is left-handed anyway (the latest research puts it at 13 percent – Ed), Apple should consider giving us iPhone Users an option in the Settings Menu where we could alter the handling of call answer or decline to include a switch between Left and Right and the 'swish' option to go from Right to Left.

On taking a snap poll among friends who are using the iPhone, all agree the choice should be made available.

Lefties especially like the idea and people migrating from Nokia phones, among others, point out it is almost a default international



standard that the green or answer button is on the left and the red or decline button is on the right anyway.

What do Australian Macworld readers think?

*Mark Kelly,
Upper Mt. Gravatt, QLD*

I think you're right on the money, Mark. The reason the iPhone is such a winner is that it's almost infinitely, and easily, 'tweakable'. The more settings options, the better! And yes, I've always thought it strange that the buttons are reversed compared to every other phone I've owned or reviewed (and that's scores of them).

Even so, I'd prefer to always have the buttons and get rid of the slider that appears on a locked screen, but the slider seems to be there as a safety measure against your iPhone answering an unwanted call when it's in a pocket or handbag. – DB

STICKY SUBJECT



I'm writing in response to the letter in the October 2009 issue of *Australian Macworld*, in which Bill Whiten outlined ways to adjust the fan speed on MacBook Pros.

I agree with Apple Australia's reply that "We do not recommend the use of third-party products that can change the thermal tuning that Apple has developed for each product." However, I do have a question/query in relation to the hardware that runs the fans or the heat sink.

I'm aware Apple recommends that users should not service or touch the hardware of their computer while it's under warranty, and that includes servicing them as Apple has certified technicians to carry this out.

I have abided by this rule. However, after my PowerBook G4's extended three-year warranty ran out, and having had several logic board failures during the warranty period, I began to think about why or how this could of happened so many times.

I began investigating and found that my heat sink, when mounted properly, has to the left hand side of it, a piece of metal that is sunk into the board, and is copper in colour and texture.


At first I could not see this as it was covered with gel, grey in colour and sticky like Blu-Tack. What I imagined at first was that my heat sink had been changed from its original state out of the box. So I found a second-hand parts dealer,

and found a clipping of a heat sink and could see the piece of metal described above without gel on it. I did several other searches and found the same result. My query is, would this gel covering the heat sink have contributed to so many logic board failures?

John Ainsworth,
Sydney, NSW

I don't have a clue, John, but I'm sure one of our readers does! – DB

BLUETOOTH BLUES

 What's with Apple only offering a crippled version of Bluetooth on the iPhone? Any cheap mobile phone has better Bluetooth capabilities than the more expensive iPhone.

I tried connecting my iPhone to the Sudio Vogue handsfree kit I've been using for months with my old Nokia

phone. Nothing. The iPhone doesn't even recognise my iMac via Bluetooth!

I look online, thinking maybe my iPhone is faulty, and I see that Bluetooth on iPhones only works for some headsets. Nothing more.

Why would Apple not incorporate full Bluetooth capabilities on the iPhone? Doesn't make sense!

Steve Younis,
via email

I've also had problems with Bluetooth on the iPhone, Steve, despite having a 3GS running OS 3, which is supposed to have fixed many of these problems. I just don't use it any more, which is definitely not a solution! – DB

WHERE WAS THE FT1?

Thank you for your magazine. It is a wonderful (and affordable) read in among all of the international mags that are available.

I write to you regarding your Holiday Cameras Lab Test (AMW, December 2009) and the lack of the Panasonic Lumix DMC-FT1.

While I don't own one, I have been given a video that was made up of still pictures and video from the FT1, and it was fantastic. It is also waterproof to three meters and shock-proof to some height.

I understand that you can't include every camera in an article with a five-camera feature, but it does seem a dead ringer for the category the article was aiming at.

As I am thinking of buying one, I am wondering why it was not included.

Thank you again for your great magazine.

Norman Tatterson,
Melbourne, VIC

You're right, Norman – it should have been in there. It looks like a cracker. – DB

■ Letters should be emailed to macworldeditor@niche.com.au with a subject header of "Letter to the Editor" or by post to *Australian Macworld* Mailbox, 142 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne, Victoria, 3205.

■ Letters of fewer than 200 words are given preference. Comments posted to the forums on www.macworld.com.au are also eligible for the prize. We reserve the right to edit letters and probably will.

■ To be eligible for the prize, you must include your full name and address, including state or territory.

Each month, Conexus is giving away a prize to the reader who submits what we think is the most interesting letter. This month, the prize is a JBL OnTour XT sound station worth \$299.95. The high-performance 2.1-channel sound centre can be operated by remote control from up to 5.5m away and, when connected to your iPod, iPhone or any other music source with an audio jack, provides clean, powerful sound in a compact, portable design. Under the hood are four speakers pumping out 8W per channel. Take complete control of your travelling experience with the JBL On Tour XT sound system. www.conexus.com.au



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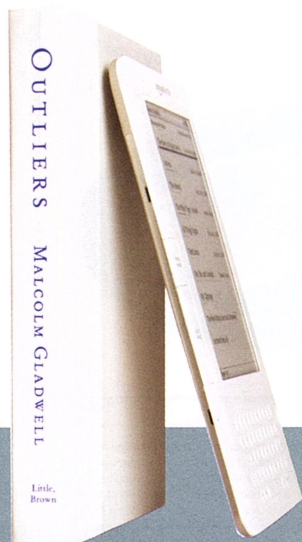
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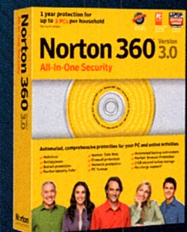
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IPHONE STILL SAFE

As expected, Google announced its new Android-powered Nexus One handset at CES, but it seems Apple has nothing to worry about regarding the iPhone.

The Nexus One is an HTC-produced Android touchscreen handset with a 1GHz Snapdragon processor, 512MB of RAM, 512MB of ROM, and an included 4GB SD card (expandable to 32GB of memory).

Among its features are a trackball that pulses light to alert users of events like new emails or text messages, plus light and proximity sensors and a compass and accelerometer. The 5-megapixel camera includes an LED flash and takes MPEG 4 videos.

A nice touch is the phone's two microphones – one in the front and one at the back, enabling noise cancellation.

Initially available in the US on T-Mobile's network or unlocked, Google said the phone will also become available from Verizon as well as Vodafone in Europe.

Rumours of the Nexus One's existence had prompted, as with every new smartphone in the post-iPhone era, talk of its being an iPhone killer. While the Google crew shied away from stating as much during the launch, saying merely that choice was good, they did describe the Nexus One as a 'superphone'. When asked to tease out that description, Google execs pointed to the high-powered CPU, gigabytes of storage, and downloadable apps.

Sound like anybody you know?

So, is the Nexus One an iPhone killer, then? There's really nothing revolutionary about it. It looks like any other touchscreen phone and it runs more or less the same Android software as its siblings like the Droid and Eris.

The Nexus One may be the best Android phone yet, but mainly what sets it apart from its predecessors is Google's name on the back and the fact that you buy the phone through Google, rather than having to wrestle with the arcane procedures of a wireless provider – a page taken from Apple's own book.

Google still has a lot of catching up to do. Three billion App Store downloads and a 100,000-plus app catalogue are a huge head start for the iPhone, not to mention the tremendous amount of mindshare Apple's device holds in the smartphone – or, if you prefer, superphone – market.



HP-Slate-2. The HP 'slate' shown off by Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer failed to dampen anticipation of the Apple tablet (or iSlate, or whatever it ends up being called). It's nice-looking but underpowered, and it runs Windows 7, which isn't a great platform for a touchscreen product.

HOPE APLENTY AT CES

While global consumer electronics sales are expected to remain flat through 2010 compared to 2009 due to the recession, vendors of smartphones, LCD TVs and a wide range of other products are still writing software, building hardware and marketing new concepts.

The next consumer electronics generation was on display at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas late last month, with 2000-plus exhibitors showing off their wares and plans.

Carl Howe, an analyst at Yankee Group, said that the gathered crowd and some of the devices indicated a sense of hope emerging from the ravages caused by a serious recession. "People are upbeat," he said.

Howe and other visitors said that the world's struggling economies hadn't caused CES to fall from its perch as a mainstay technology show that offers the world a look at the status and future of consumer electronics markets.

The technology shown off included everything from 3D high definition televisions to internet radio boomboxes, along with gaming devices and wireless charging products.

The Consumer Electronics Association, which sponsors and runs the CES event, has identified a melding of devices with new delivery modes for content as a strong consumer electronics trend in 2010.

High-definition and 3D TV sets are also expected to be hot in 2010, after being held back somewhat by the recession, CEA officials said.

While the 2009 show was marked by low attendance and gloom – you could almost see the small stormclouds hovering over attendees' heads – there seemed to be many more people in the Vegas convention centres and hotels this year.

Speaking to the *Wall Street Journal*, Hisense chairman Zhou Houjian said, "Compared with the same time last year, we feel much better. We feel the US economy got a lot of new energy."

The Chinese electronics manufacturer was one of those sending far larger delegations to CES this year – there were 80 employees in Vegas, compared with 40 last year.

There were too many products to mention, but here are a few of the most important or interesting:

Tablets. Among the most anticipated events at CES were the launch of the Google-branded Nexus One smartphone (see sidebar) and Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer's keynote address.

The Nexus One managed to impress attendees, but Ballmer failed. While Apple was conspicuously absent from CES, the hype was still swirling around the imminent launch its much-anticipated tablet computer. For a couple of days, though, it was rumoured that Microsoft would beat Apple to the punch by launching a groundbreaking tablet or 'slate' style PC.

It didn't happen.

A prototype of an HP touchscreen tablet made a brief appearance at Ballmer's keynote, alongside tablets from Pegatron and Archos. Ballmer didn't spend too much time demonstrating the HP tablet, and it was patently not groundbreaking.

It's a single-screen slate PC that runs Windows 7 and has multitouch. Ballmer didn't mention any specs or other information on the tablets, but we'll learn more details about the HP tablet later this year.



Samsung NX10 camera. Samsung describes the NX10 as having "the heart of a DSLR in the compact frame of a digital camera". Despite its small size, it boasts an APS-C size CMOS sensor and retains the ability to change lenses. There's no optical viewfinder – you use a 3in viewscreen or eye-level electronic viewfinder.

From what we could glean from the keynote, the HP and Archos tablets look to have screens of around 9.6 or 10 inches. Ballmer showed the HP tablet running Amazon's Kindle for PC software, therefore using it as an ebook reader. He used it in both portrait mode (as an ebook reader) and landscape mode (to play a video); when he switched between the two, it automatically switched orientations, so it has an accelerometer built-in.

3D TV. The really big buzz at CES, then, centred around 3D, and Sony started its press event by exhibiting its commitment to 3D with a live demo of 3D capture and display technology.

Sir Howard Stringer brought Sony Music artist Taylor Swift up on stage to perform her hit *Love Story*. As she performed, cameras by the stage captured her outstanding acoustic performance live in 3D, and projected it on the screen.

Already, last year's release of U2 3D has made a compelling case for watching concert performances captured in 3D. This prospect gets all the more compelling if coupled with the prospect of showing a performer live during the concert. Somehow, we can't help but think this will take some

of the sting out of not being able to see the stadium's stage from afar. Those big-screen projections will have a whole new meaning.

Sony also announced that it would join Discovery and IMAX to launch a 3D broadcast channel in 2011.

Sony will release three series of 3D HDTVs this year. The company didn't discuss pricing, but only the top-of-the-line NX900 series comes with the necessary transmitter and two pairs of active-shutter glasses (made by Real D).

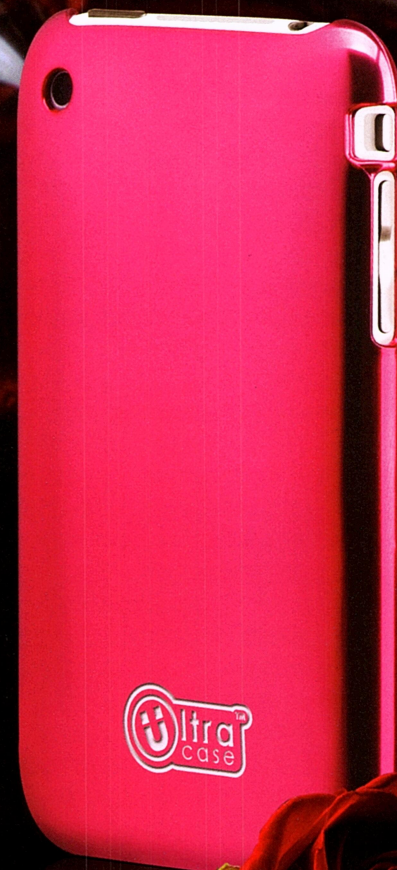
Over at Panasonic, the company said it planned to bring 3D HDTVs mainstream, and gave model info on five plasma sets slated to ship by



Panasonic 3D Eyewear. 3D TVs look like any other TVs until you've got them turned on and amazing you, so we thought we'd show you Panasonic's 3D eyewear instead. Each TV will ship with a single pair of the pretty funky glasses which have "high-precision shutter control" for clear images. Extra pairs can be bought separately.



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FLYING PARROTS

Buzzing above the heads of marvelling, camera-snapping media representatives at CES was a weird looking, smooth-flying toy helicopter from Parrot that can be controlled with nothing more than an iPhone or iPod touch and appropriate software.

The AR.Drone, a four-rotor 'quadricopter' which is controlled by Wi-Fi signals, includes wireless cameras that can stream video to a iPhone or iPod Touch, thus allowing you to use your actual surroundings as 'targets' in a 'augmented reality' (that's what the AR stands for) video game.

Want to take out those mean goldfish? You can hover the copter nearby, focus on them with the wireless cameras, target the dangerous beasts and 'fire' away.

The copter, made of carbon fibre and PA66 plastic, can be used outdoors with the rotors unprotected or indoors with a shield which protects and allows the copter to bump gently against obstacles – like unwary people – without damaging the rotors.

The quadricopter is controlled by accelerometers and an embedded Linux platform originally designed for mobile phones, according to Parrot. Software for controlling the copter would be available on a number of platforms, not just the iPhone and iPod touch, the company added.

The AR.Drone has a top speed rating of about 11 mph and weighs 360g without the protective hull and 400g with it.

The unit runs on a necessarily lightweight, three-cell, 1000 mAh lithium polymer battery. It has a 15-frame-per-second (fps) front camera as well as a high-speed (60fps) vertical camera that looks straight down. The four 15-watt rotors spin as fast as 1500rpm.

Parrot is better known for its Bluetooth devices such as wireless stereo speakers and handsfree car gadgets. It bills the AR.Drone as the "first helicopter with automatic flight stabilisation."

The unit will be available later this year, the company said. Pricing has not been set.



mid-year, and a 3D-enabled Blu-ray disc player.

The upcoming full HD (1080p) 3D Viera TVs range in screen size from nearly 50in to 65in. Each set will ship with one pair of the special glasses required to see content in 3D. The 3D-enabled Blu-ray disc player, model DMP-BDT350, will play standard Blu-ray discs and DVDs.

Officials pointed to the healthy box-office receipts for James Cameron's 3D sci-fi adventure epic, *Avatar*, as an indication of the public's appetite for 3D content. (*Avatar* grossed in excess of US\$1 billion (about \$1.08 billion) worldwide in the first 17 days of its release.)

Samsung showed a complete 3D home entertainment system, which includes high-definition 3D TVs, the

BD-C6900 Blu-ray disc player and an audio system to be sold together or separately. Samsung has also allied with Dreamworks Animation and Technicolor on promoting content for 3D home entertainment.

Dreamworks CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg called Samsung's new 3D LED TVs "stunning" and showed off the Blu-ray disc version of the 3D movie *Monsters vs. Aliens*.

Samsung also showed off its thinnest LED TV ever – the LED9000 series, which is just 7.6mm thick. When a Samsung employee turned the big-screen TV sideways, cheers came from the audience at the CES press conference.

Cameras. With a handful of new Cyber-shot camera announcements at CES, Sony became the first company to offer TransferJet-capable devices for wireless peer-to-peer sharing between cameras, laptops, and other devices.

The new Cyber-shots are also the first Sony point-and-shoot cameras to (finally) support SD and SDHC cards; all models offer hybrid storage-card slots that can handle both SD/SDHC and Sony's proprietary Memory Stick format.

Other notable features include full HD video capture in AVCHD format, an improved Sweep Panorama mode, an in-camera high-dynamic range mode, and geotagging capabilities.

TransferJet is a proximity-based, wireless technology that transfers images, video, and other files between compatible devices when you simply hold the gadgets about 3cm apart.

From there, the technology creates a link between the compatible devices and allows you to transfer files. It's fast, too: TransferJet supports peer-to-peer file sharing at speeds around 375 megabits per second. Unlike the lower-bandwidth Bluetooth, no device pairing is necessary.

Many photographers were expecting a new Micro Four-Thirds camera from Panasonic, but were disappointed. The company did, however, announce six new



Swann pencam. Melbourne-based Swann Security was also showing its wares at CES, and catching the eye was this PenCam Mini Video Camera & Recorder. This working pen captures 640x480 colour AVI video, plus 1280x960 still images. Footage is stored on its 2GB internal memory.

point-and-shoot cameras. All of Panasonic's new Lumix offerings will support the super-high-capacity SDXC card format, as well as SDHC and SD cards. The unveiled models include the brand-new Lumix FH series, as well as a touchscreen camera.

After a groundbreaking 2009 in terms of point-and-shoot camera design, Samsung isn't taking any time off from the innovation game.

The company's announcements at CES expand on the more interesting items that it offered last year, namely dual-screen cameras, wireless connectivity options, AMOLED displays, gesture-controlled touchscreen interfaces, stylish looks, and radical design elements.

Samsung's major camera announcement was the NX10, the first model in its NX series. It's an interchangeable-lens model that's slightly less bulky than a DSLR, offering a 14.6-megapixel APS-C-size CMOS sensor that's significantly larger than the sensors found in Micro Four-Thirds system cameras from Panasonic and Olympus.



iLuv App Station. iLuv's innovative App Station is a rotational dock for the iPhone and iPod touch that uses the iLuv app to make it into a "music listening, movie-watching, alarm clock dock". The product, which was a CES award honouree, should be available this month.

Like a Micro Four-Thirds camera, Samsung's NX cameras eliminate the mirror box found in the body of traditional DSLR cameras. This allows the NX10 to have a more compact frame than a DSLR while still retaining the capability to swap lenses.



Liquid Image dive mask. Liquid Image's Scuba Series HD is a dive mask that has an integrated water-resistant high-definition 720P digital video camera that also takes 5-megapixel photographs. It operates to a depth of 40m and eliminates the need to carry an underwater camera.

www.macworld.com.au



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In brief

MAKE YOUR OWN SIMS WORLD

Players of *The Sims 3* can now create their own worlds, and share those created by other Sims fanatics across the globe. *The Sims 3* Create a World Tool – BETA allows players to use the same robust world-building tools the EA team uses to create worlds and towns for *The Sims 3*.

You can start from scratch, or begin your creation with pre-made Sunset Valley or Riverview terrains. Once you're satisfied with your world, you can share it online through *The Sims 3* Exchange.

Advanced designers can even create and import designs from Photoshop and other programs into their world.

Also new is the ability – via an update – for *The Sims 3* players to shop from *The Sims 3* Store while playing the game. Players can browse the full *The Sims 3* Store catalogue directly from their game and purchase exclusive furniture, décor, hair, and clothing – without ever closing the game.

au.thesims3.com/game/tools/world

EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL NIKONS

NASA has placed an order for 11 Nikon D3s digital SLR cameras and seven AF-S NIKKOR 14-24mm f/2.8G ED lenses to be carried on the Space Shuttle and used to photograph activities at the International Space Station (ISS).

Interestingly, no special modifications will be made to these products – they will be the same as those available to the general public.

Nikon says this equipment will be used along with the Nikon D2XS digital SLR cameras, NIKKOR lenses, and Nikon Speedlights already in use at the International Space Station.

"Nikon has spent many years contributing to NASA's study of space through the development and manufacture of advanced and extremely durable cameras as well as NIKKOR lenses that make the most of Nikon's optical technologies, and of which production has recently reached 50 million units," the company says. "To date, NASA has captured more than 700,000 images using Nikon equipment carried into space."

The D3s was released in November last year as the latest flagship model for Nikon FX-format digital SLR cameras.

www.nikon.com.au



THE REAL JAVA

Old CRT iMacs are being given a new lease of life with up-to-the-minute computing power, thumping sound – and even the ability to make coffee.

Klaus Diebel, a jack-of-all-trades based in Germany's Black Forest, strips the innards out of the 'balloon'-style iMacs, and inserts a new Mac mini, a JBL Spot speaker system with subwoofer and a WMF1 coffee machine.

There's no working screen, but the trade-off is a fake screen into which you insert a mug which is filled with freshly brewed coffee at the touch of a button.

"It's a fact that CRT iMacs are increasingly losing their usability through performance issues," Diebel says. "But it's also a fact that they are far too beautiful to be dumped."

"It started with an idea to make a bird-house (out of an old iMac). The idea stuck, until I noticed my run-down letterbox. My cats and a bird-house are incompatible anyway. I needed a letterbox ... and so I did it."

It was a short step from there to putting a coffee-maker in the iMac after Diebel discovered the WMF1. Then, as the CRT tube had been removed, he thought the space would be perfect for one of JBL's dome-style subwoofers.

The addition of the Mac mini was "close to magic".

"One day I saw a friend's unused Mac mini," Diebel says. "When I took the measurements, I couldn't believe my eyes – the hard-drive and optical

drive retainers of the iMac and the Mac mini are exactly the same size (width).

"More magic: the ports of the Mac mini are exactly in the location where one changes the RAM of the iMac – the only opening on the iMac! And that's not all. The power button of the iMac and the Mac mini are both on the right side and they have the same elevation.

"The CD/DVD slots of both the iMac and the mini also fit perfectly when the Mac mini occupies its final position. If Apple had only changed one these features, everything would have been impossible."

Diebel has had to source specialised cables and adaptors, however, which add to the final cost.

You can't order the units ready-made, however. You either have to send your iMac to Diebel's office in St Georgen, Germany, or pay a fee for him to bid for a suitable machine on eBay on your behalf.

You need to fill out an online form specifying your iMac's details and Diebel will reply with a final quote, including shipping costs. Modification and delivery takes about a month.

The price, if you provide your own iMac, will be in the region of €900 (about \$1400). Diebel charges a €30 (about \$50) fee to buy you an iMac on eBay (you obviously bear the purchase and shipping costs).

www.kiwidee.com

INTEL TO CHIP AWAY THIS YEAR

Intel is facing a challenging year as it fends off accusations of monopolistic behaviour while trying to establish a larger presence in the mobile and graphics segments.

Intel suffered big setbacks last year, delaying key products like the Larrabee graphics processor and attracting the attention of governments worldwide for alleged anticompetitive behaviour. Intel's processors go into more than 80 percent of PCs worldwide – including Apple's product line – and the chip giant has battled

accusations of using its market position to shut out competitors.

Last May the European Commission found Intel guilty of monopolistic behaviour, fining the chip maker €1.06 billion (about \$1.6 billion) after finding the company guilty of giving rebates to PC makers in exchange for buying its microprocessors in bulk.

More recently, the New York attorney general and the US Federal Trade Commission filed antitrust cases, accusing Intel of illegally using its market position to stifle competition and depriving consumers of choice in the microprocessor industry.

The increased scrutiny could have an impact on business for Intel in the short term, analysts say.

"It's always a distraction when you have a team of lawyers breathing down your neck," says Insight 64 principal analyst Nathan Brookwood. "When you have a dominant position in the market, there are a variety of constraints that the legal system places on what you can do to maintain the position and how you behave."

Top executives may spend more time poring over legal issues, but Intel has a strong structure in place to handle day-to-day issues, Brookwood says. Intel has strong PC and server chip sales, which should continue as it releases chips and executes its manufacturing strategy.

While legal issues shouldn't threaten Intel's market position, they could change the way Intel deals with customers, says Gabriel Consulting Group principal analyst Dan Olds. This could help competitors like Advanced Micro Devices and Nvidia, which could take advantage of Intel's perceived period of weakness to grab market share.

Intel came under increased scrutiny because of incentives it provided to PC makers that shut out rivals like AMD. Intel may need to cut back on some of those incentives, which could provide a level playing field for AMD to compete, analysts

say. Last year AMD settled a lawsuit with Intel for US\$1.25 billion (about \$1.4 billion) after accusing it of offering rebates that kept AMD from making deals with PC makers.

PC makers will now have an opportunity to evaluate AMD and Intel chips based on merit and commercial propositions. But will PC makers choose more AMD chips over Intel?

"I would be surprised if AMD would win," Brookwood says. Intel has stuck to product plans like clockwork and emerged with a stronger product line than it had a few years ago, he adds. AMD is a generation behind in the manufacturing process, and will have to compete fiercely to get design wins. However, AMD offers a price advantage and better graphics capabilities than Intel, which could attract some PC makers.

Another analyst agreed, saying it remains to be seen how much the tide has swung in AMD's favour.

"It's not a simple question," says J. Gold Associates principal analyst Jack Gold. "Yes, AMD chips are less expensive and lower the overall costs of systems, which consumers appreciate. But Intel chips generally offer higher performance on PCs."

Businesses may be willing to pay a few dollars more to get extra performance from Intel chips, but consumers may not, Gold said.

The FTC has also expanded its case against Intel by talking about graphics processors, which is a significant escalation, analysts say. Some complaints involved Intel doing exclusive deals where PC makers had to buy processors with chipsets, but the FTC wants to make the chipset market more competitive, Olds says. That should open the market to AMD and Nvidia.

Intel has an eye toward changing its chip architecture by integrating many of the chipset components, including the graphics processor, inside the CPU. The FTC could take a hard look at those levels of integration, which could have an impact on the way Intel licenses and

designs chip technology, analysts say. Intel plans to ship laptop and desktop processors that integrate GPUs inside CPUs this year.

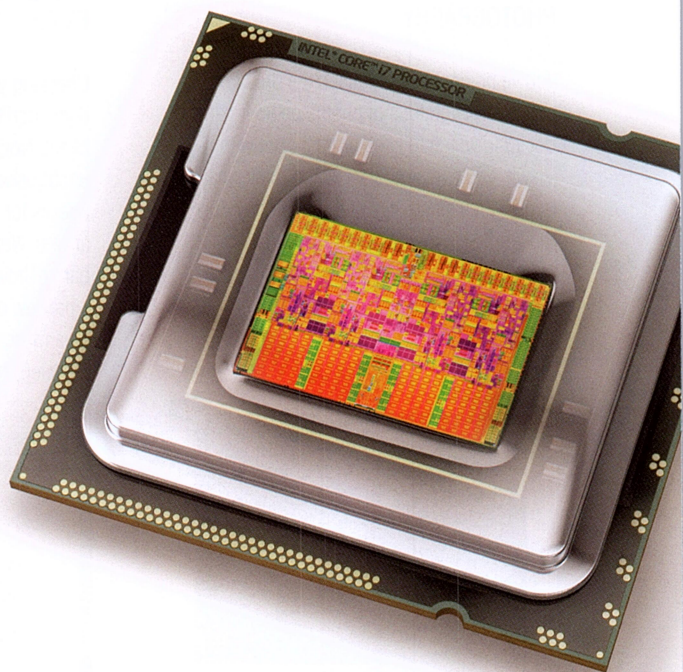
Chip licensing battles are already brewing – a year ago Intel filed a lawsuit asking a judge to rule that Nvidia was not licensed to produce chipsets for Intel's processors with integrated memory controllers. Nvidia later countersued Intel for breach of contract.

The impact of the FTC's actions could be "be less than expected", however, and US courts may not be willing to force Intel to licence modern x86 instruction sets. Broadpoint Amtech analyst Doug Freedman wrote in a recent research note.

At any rate, despite the big lead over AMD in the microprocessor market, Intel won't rest on its laurels. The PC market is growing at a slower rate than ever before, and Intel wants to establish a larger presence in markets like the mobile and embedded segments, Brookwood says.

"The challenge for Intel is to find ways to expand its markets in ways that don't necessarily get it in trouble legally," he says.

www.intel.com





MAC GEMS

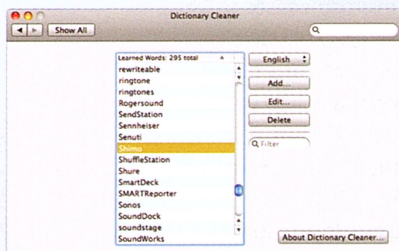
The best in low-cost Mac software.

DICTIONARY CLEANER 1.5

twoamsoftware.com
PRODUCTIVITY

Mac OS X's built-in spelling checker lets you add words to its dictionaries so they won't be flagged as incorrect in the future. But there's no way to edit those additions. Dictionary Cleaner shows a sorted list of all words you've added and lets you edit or delete any of them. You can also add new words, though each must be typed manually. It's easy to use and fills an obvious hole in OS X's feature set.

Price: Free

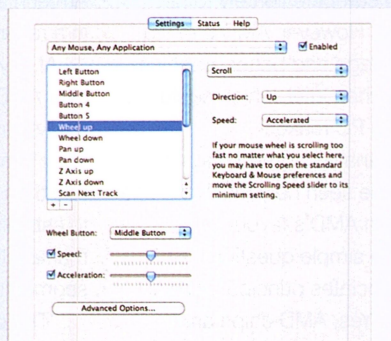


USB OVERDRIVE 3.0.1

www.montalcini.com
UTILITIES

USB Overdrive has long let Mac users customise their USB input devices (and Bluetooth mice) with more and better options than their included software; it even works with many devices that don't officially support the Mac. Even better, you can make peripherals work differently in different applications.

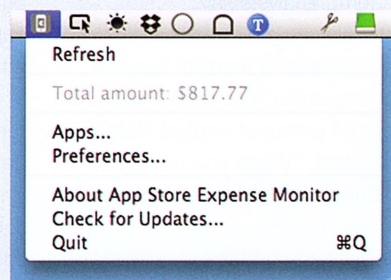
Price: \$22.79



APP STORE EXPENSE MONITOR 1.1.3

wetfish.de
IPHONE

The iPhone's App Store makes purchasing so simple, it's easy to lose track of how much you've spent. App Store Expense Monitor reports the approximate sum of all your App Store purchases. It also provides a sortable table of your apps that includes the developer, the App Store category, and the current price. You can export the tables. **Price: Free (donations welcomed)**

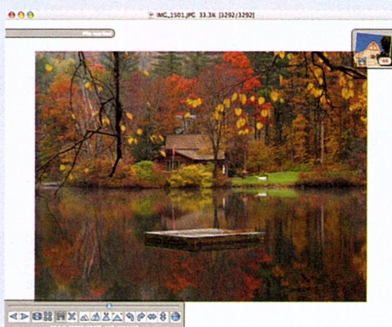


VIEWIT

www.hexcat.com
PHOTOGRAPHY

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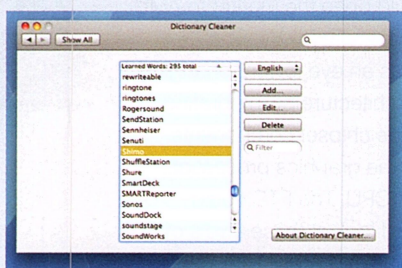
Price: \$25.25



NOTIFY 1.0.5

vibealicious.com
EMAIL

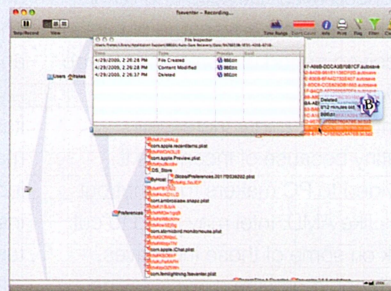
Checking your Gmail account can be a hassle if you don't access it from a dedicated email client. Notify is an elegant utility that sits unobtrusively in your menu bar and periodically checks for new messages. When new mail arrives, Notify informs you via either the menu bar or Growl notifications. Click on the menu for a preview of each new message; double-click on a message to view it in Gmail in your web browser. **Price: Free**



FSEVENTER 2.6.6

fernlighning.com
UTILITY

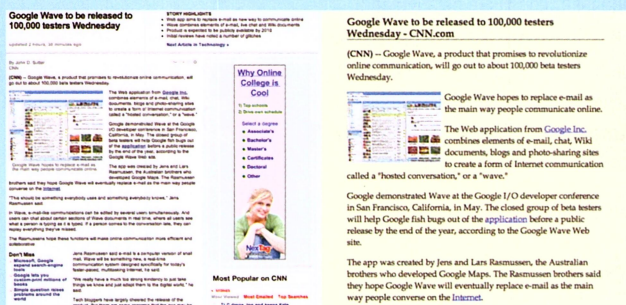
Have you ever wondered what a non-Apple software installer actually installs, or what files a particular program is actually creating or modifying when it's churning away? A clever tool named fseventer can help you solve these mysteries. It monitors changes to your file system, then displays a graphical real-time representation of those changes. It also offers a chronological list view of file system activity. **Price: Free (donations welcomed)**



READABILITY

lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability
WEB

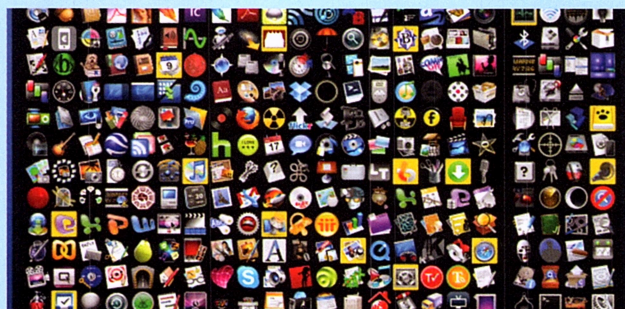
Readability – an online service – is a bookmarklet-based tool, designed for Safari and Firefox, that reformats a web page and presents its main content in a plain, easy-to-read layout. You go to the Readability website and choose layout style, font size and margin width, then drag the Readability bookmarklet into your Bookmarks. Then, to transform a web page you just click the bookmarklet. **Price: Free**



BEVY 1.0.4

bergdesign.com/bevy
UTILITIES

Bevy is a fun but useful application launcher. Press a keyboard shortcut, or click Bevy's menu-bar icon, and the utility pops up a graphical display of all the applications on your Mac, with any currently running programs highlighted. Click a program's icon to launch (or switch to) the application. Dragging a document into Bevy's display highlights all the programs that can open the file. **Price: US\$9.95 (about \$11)**



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Playout



Your Screens





APP GUIDE

iPhone and iPod touch software that's caught our eye.

CAMERA GENIUS PHOTOGRAPHY

With low resolution – the 3GS offers 3 megapixels, the other models just 2 megapixels – and no flash or zoom, the iPhone's camera leaves a lot to be desired. But Camera Genius can help you take better pictures with a number of features – digital zoom, sound capture, anti-shake, self-timer, burst-shooting and more – that try to compensate for the iPhone's photographic limitations.

CodeGoo. Price: \$2.49



VTIE PREMIUM BUSINESS

This app is helping preserve what's becoming increasingly arcane knowledge, providing step-by-step instructions for a dozen tie knots, from the well-known Half-Windsor to the more unconventional and esoteric Atlantic. The illustrations and instructions are detailed and clear. There is a free version, but the premium app includes several more styles of knot, including the bow tie.

Aurokarl Klostermann. Price: \$2.49



360 LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

This app lets you reach out and touch your Xbox Live account from just about anywhere, as well as access several of the service's tracking and messaging features. You can manage your Gamertag as you would in front of the actual box. You can see who's online or not, check 'gamerscores', biographical info, avatars, locations and so on. You can also read and send your Live messages.

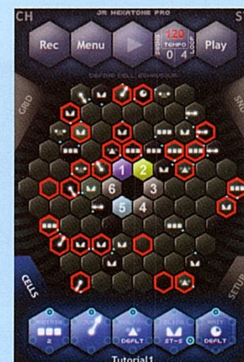
Juan Xavier Larrea. Price: \$2.49



JR HEXATONE PRO MUSIC

You'll definitely encounter a learning curve with this rhythm sequencer and the hexagonal shapes you use to create music, but it gets easier once you learn the basics. Each hexagon holds instructions explaining what to do with a music sample – you have 90 hexagons that you can use to create and control drum patterns for amazingly complex beats. One of the best music-making apps.

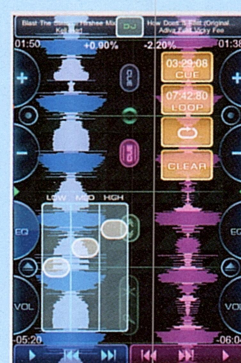
Amidio. Price: \$12.99



TOUCH DJ MUSIC

Touch DJ offers real-time independent manipulation of two MP3 files, including scratching, looping, positioning, equalisation, effects and pitching. The lack of an additional headphone input on the iPhone and iPod touch when mixing means the application uses 'visual mixing' to discover which tracks mix well together, with the graphic display of the track waveforms next to each other.

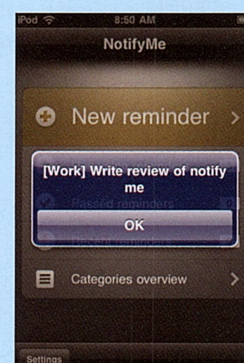
Amidio. Price: \$23.99



NOTIFYME PRODUCTIVITY

PoweryBase's to-do list manager, notifyMe, takes advantage of push notifications to remind you when it's time to get stuff done. It doesn't try to compete with more full-featured task managers; instead, notifyMe shines in its simplicity, using a minimal, polished, interface. The app works best when it comes to reminding you of the mundane to-dos you need to take care of throughout the day.

PoweryBase. Price: \$4.99



All apps available from
Apple's App Store through
iTunes or directly from your
iPhone or iPod touch.

MYPANTONE REFERENCE

The myPantone iPhone app won't replace sophisticated colour-calibration hardware or even a run-of-the-mill fan deck (and developer Pantone doesn't claim that it will). Instead, myPantone puts an elaborate cross-referencing system for Pantone's major colour libraries in your pocket, allowing you to identify colours and experiment with colour groups when you're on the go.

Pantone.

Price: \$12.99



SAY IT & MAIL IT BUSINESS

Voice memos were among the more highly touted features of the iPhone 3.0 software update, so it might not be immediately obvious what purpose an app such as Carnation Software's Say It & Mail It would serve. The app's one-sentence summary would read along the lines of, "You can record and send voice memos from your iPhone or iPod touch." But it also adds many useful functions.

Carnation Software.

Price: \$2.49



Needs NoteBook

Stickers. Scraps of paper. Web clippings. Meeting notes. Reminders. Take control of it all with Circus Ponies NoteBook. Get organized using a familiar notebook interface of pages, tabs, and sections. "Clip" web research,

e-mails and other content to your Notebooks for handy reference. Never miss a detail with voice-annotated notes you play back on your iPod. Diagram and sketch when words won't convey your thoughts. Track and sync your tasks



Has NoteBook

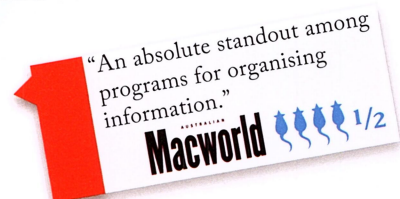
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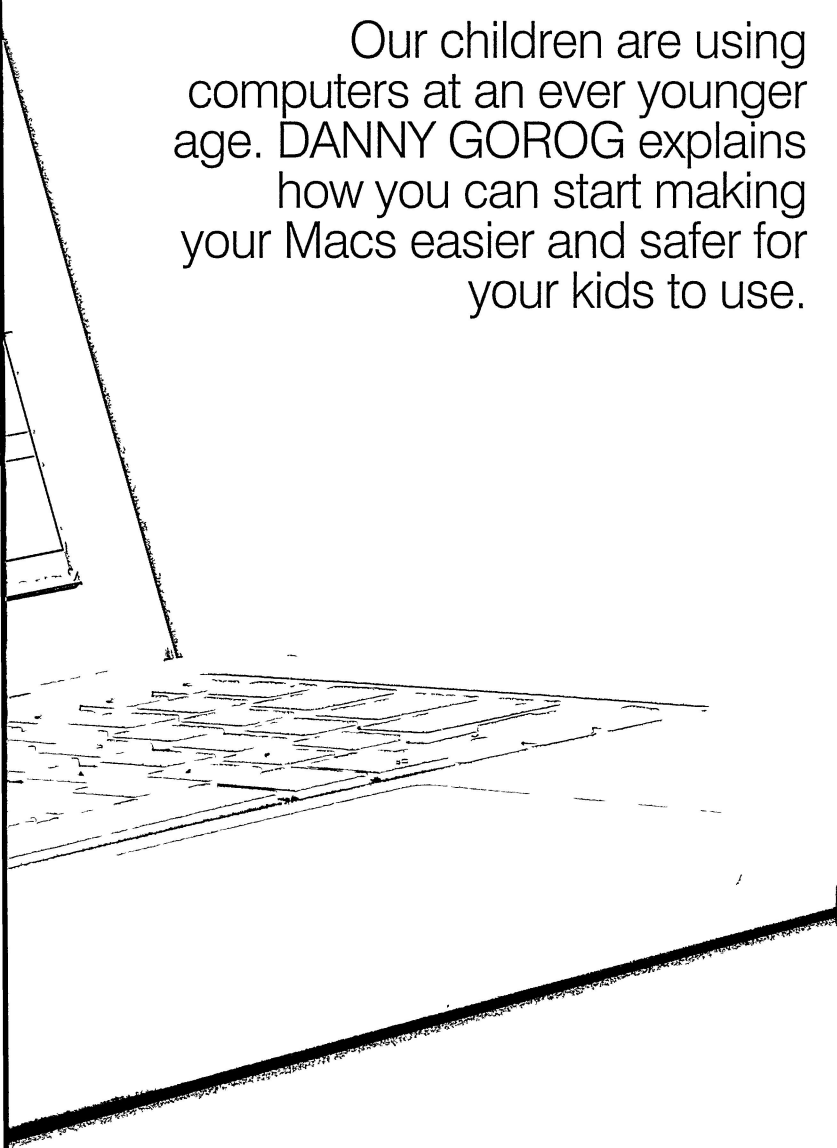
next byte

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The Kid's Mac



Our children are using computers at an ever younger age. DANNY GOROG explains how you can start making your Macs easier and safer for your kids to use.

Keeping your Mac Kid friendly is easy thanks to some of the built-in features in OS X.

The most important of these features is called Parental Controls. This lets you set up a separate account for your child, or children (you can set up multiple accounts and configure them all differently) and limit, restrict or simply monitor their use of the computer and applications.

Other features in OS X that make your Mac more kid friendly are the Simple Finder; a simplified version of the Finder which makes navigating and loading applications easier, and built-in security features that give you peace of mind, straight out of the box.

Once you've set up your Mac right, there are lots of activities your kids can do on it; everything from playing online games, setting up your Mac to help your kids master a second language or even updating their toys with new games and rewards.

But remember, no matter how locked-down your computer is, your kids will always find a way. That's why the best advice, according to the experts, is to engage with your child and understand what they are doing on the computer. By communicating you'll be able to guide them in the right direction.

SETTING UP PARENTAL CONTROLS

Setting up parental controls in OS X is easy, and can provide you with a level of security and assurance that you can't get by giving your kids unrestricted access to the computer.

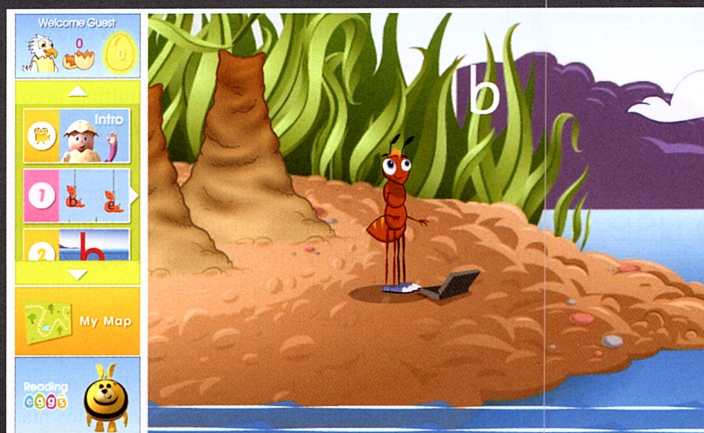
To setup parental controls you'll first need to create an additional user account without administration privileges. To do this, open the Systems Preferences and go to Accounts. Click on the '+' and enter the details of the kids account. Most people that I know set up one account for their kids to share, but if you have more than one child you can set up an additional account each. Change the drop down for New Account from 'Standard' to 'Managed with Parental Controls'.

EDUCATIONAL GAMES

Don't believe what you might sometimes hear – the Mac is a great computer for games, and there are plenty of excellent educational titles for your kids to play. EdSoft, one of the best software publishers, provides quality educational software and has won more awards than any other K-10 educational software publisher.

NUMBERS UP! VOLCANIC PANIC V2

Volcanic Panic (\$49.95) makes learning numbers easy. The scenario: your plane has crash-landed on a volcanic island that's about to explode. Your job is to race other players (including the computer) around the island game board to gather fuel canisters so that you've got enough to flee the island. Winning a fuel canister requires that you answer one of over 7500 maths problems covering seven maths content areas in 26 levels for ages 4 to 15+.



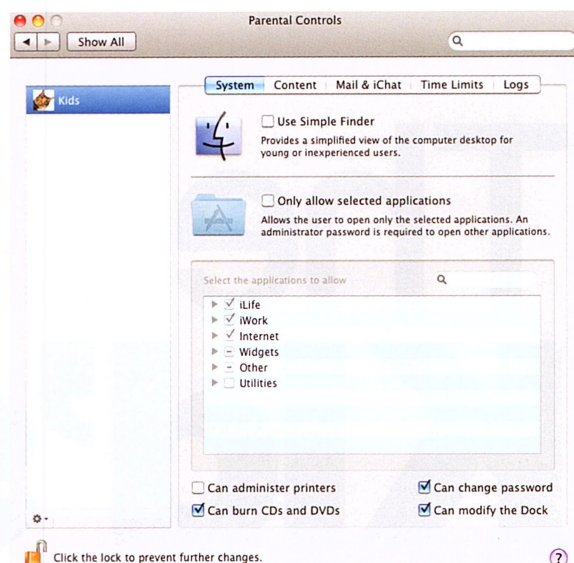
ABC READING EGGS

Reading Eggs (readingeggs.com) is an online, Flash-based reading program that your kids will love. It covers all key reading skills including phonics, sight words and vocabulary development. According to ABC it's already in use by over 125,000 students, 70,000 parents and 1000 schools. The program is suitable for kids aged 4 to 7 years old.

There's a free 14-day and then you'll need to pay \$49.95 for a six-month subscription, or \$79.95 for a year.

LOTS AND LOTS MORE

The best place to start looking for kids games is www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/games/kids_learning/. There are a many different games and useful tools including KidZuu (a kid-specific web browser and search engine packed with over 2.3 million kid-friendly games, websites and videos), AlphaBaby (displays shapes, letters and images for babies and toddlers) and LadyBugs (a set of challenging activities to stimulate your child's thinking and colour recognition).



If your child is old enough to read, write and type it's probably a good idea to setup a password for their account. Like it or not, understanding passwords is important in today's society where most information is now accessed via the internet.

Once the new account is enabled click through to the 'Parental Controls' System Preference. The prefs here are broken down into five main sections:

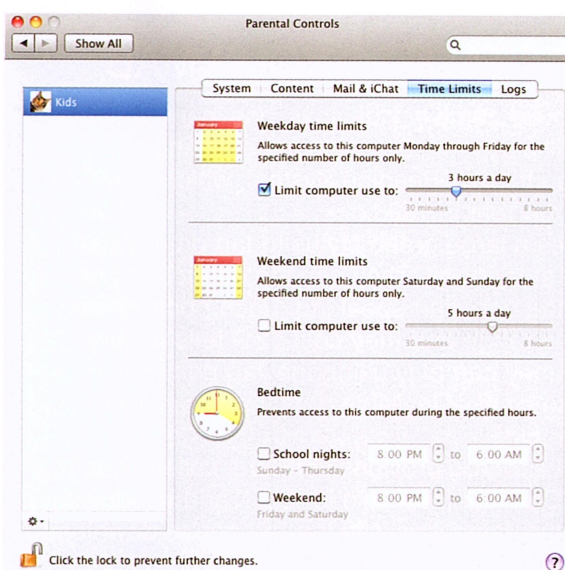
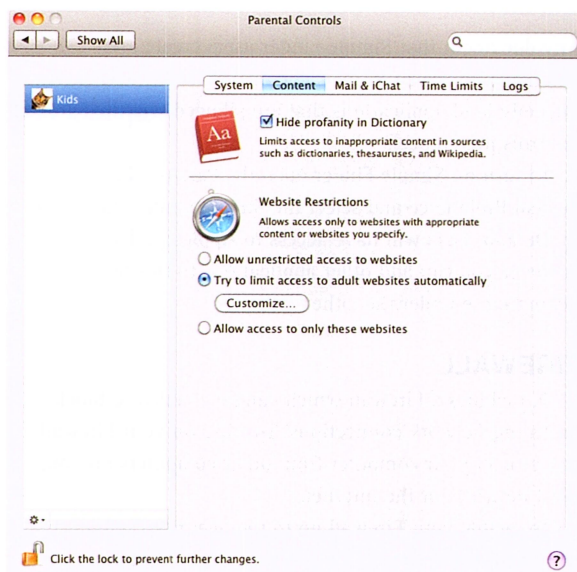
System. With Parental Controls enabled you can specify which applications your kids have access to. For example, you can restrict the applications they use to, say, just Safari and Word, and disable their use of other applications including games and system preferences. This is also the section you choose to enable the Simple Finder which provides a simplified view of the computer desktop; it should only be used if your child is having a hard time with the computer. In my experience kids are pretty savvy and don't normally require this mode.

Content. The Content tab is important as it allows you to control the websites that your kids can visit. There are three different options to choose, depending on the maturity and ability of your children.

The first, 'Allow unrestricted access to websites' lets your child browse freely without restriction. The second option, 'Try to limit access to adult websites automatically', restricts Safari to websites it deems safe.

According to Apple (support.apple.com/kb/HT2900), when this option is selected, the internet content filter does its best to block websites with inappropriate content. To do this, the internet content filter uses the same technology that the Mail application uses to identify "junk" mail. The internet content filter can identify, with a high degree of accuracy, whether a web page is safe or not by examining various properties of the website including text and structure.

The internet content filter will also block a website if the website identifies itself as adult-oriented using the RTA



far left. **System.** This tab lets you control which applications your kids have access to, and enables Simple Finder.

middle. **Content.** This tab lets you restrict web access and also provides a toggle to 'Hide profanity in the Dictionary'.

right. **Time Limits.** This is quite a powerful control, letting you configure highly specific Mac times for your kids.

(www.rtalabel.org) or SafeSurf (www.safesurf.com/ssplan.htm) rating systems, as well as forcing 'safe' searches with some search engines.

With this mode enabled, you can also check to see the sites that your child has accessed in the Logs tab of Parental Controls preferences.

Remember, no filtering system is perfect and in some situations the automatic internet content filter may mistakenly block a safe website or allow an adult-oriented website. For example, if the website uses an uncommon language or if there is very little text on the page.

These websites can be identified in the Log tab of the Parental Controls preference pane and added to the 'Always Allow' or the 'Never Allow' lists.

These lists can also be accessed by clicking the 'Customize...' button in the Content tab of the Parental Controls preferences. Websites that are mistakenly blocked can also be allowed by clicking the 'Allow...' button on the blocked web page and authenticating as an administrator.

For websites that use SSL encryption (the URL will usually begin with https), the internet content filter is unable to examine the encrypted content of the page. For this reason, encrypted websites must be explicitly allowed using the Always Allow list. Encrypted websites that are not on the Always Allow list will be blocked by the automatic internet content filter.

The Content tab also provides a toggle to 'Hide profanity in the Dictionary'. Enabling this option covers the built-in dictionary, thesaurus and Wikipedia.

Mail & iChat. This tab allows you to restrict email and iChat access to specific addresses. For example, if you only want your kids to email friends or family members, you can add their email and iChat addresses which restricts messaging to only those addresses you add.

An option at the bottom of the window 'Send permission requests to:' allows you to enter your own email address to

receive notifications when your child attempts to send an email to an address that you haven't specified in the Mail & iChat tab.

Time Limits. One of the biggest problems with kids and computers is that they just don't know when enough is enough. My four-year-old son would happily sit on a computer for an entire day.

With the Time Limits tab you can specify time limits for use. The controls are granular enough so you can, for instance, specify different time limits for both weekdays and weekends.

Even better, you can also restrict access during certain times of the day. So, for instance, you can specify that on school nights your children can't use the computer between 9pm and 6am. The same options are available for the weekend.

Logs. The logs tab is a useful tool for you to monitor what your child is doing while on the computer. Even if you choose not to enable any restrictive parental control options, the log panel will give you a snapshot of what your child is doing while on the computer, who they are conversing with, and which sites they visit.

JARGON BUSTER

Cyberstalking: Following a person's online activity to gather information, initiate contact, make threats, or engage in other forms of verbal intimidation.

Identity theft: Wrongfully impersonating someone, usually for financial gain either by exploiting the reputation of the subject person or stealing from them.

Phishing: An attempt to fraudulently acquire sensitive information like usernames and password, typically carried out by using hoax emails or instant messaging.

TOYS THAT TALK TO YOUR MAC

LeapFrog, a popular name in kids' toys, has many products that your Mac will also love. One of their better known products is called the Tag Reading System, which was awarded Toy of the Year in 1998.

Your child uses a large green stylus to tap on any part of a special Tag story book. They can tap on pictures or words to make the pen start speaking. Each book (there are over 10 in the range and they cost \$21) tells a story and has games they can play using the Tag pen, which works by reading a set of invisible dots that have been printed on the books.



LeapFrog provides software, called Leapfrog Connect (available for OS X and Windows), that interfaces with the Tag pen to download books and rewards for your kids after they read.

LeapFrog Connect lets you use your computer to engage several important features of your child's connected LeapFrog devices. It allows you to add or remove files on the device, view and collect rewards that your child earned during game play, and access valuable parent features.

LeapFrog Connect is easy to use too. Simply connect your Tag device to your Mac and LeapFrog Connect recognises the pen and asks you to log in. LeapFrog Connect can maintain multiple profiles, so your kids can share a Tag pen and maintain their own learning courses independently.

The software also talks to many other Leapfrog-branded products.

For many parents, this is enough to provide reassurance, and can help shape the way you guide your child's learning path on the computer.

Logs can also provide you with detail about their web behaviour patterns. For older children who are beginning to explore social networking this feature can be invaluable. Logs will tell you which sites your kids are trying to access, and can be a good point to start your discussion of the do's and don'ts of social networking.

THE SIMPLE FINDER

The Simple Finder provides a simplified, one-click interface for kids and others who only need access to a few items on your Mac. Once Simple Finder is enabled users will have limited access to files and applications on the computer. Only three folders will be visible in the Dock once Simple Finder is enabled: My Applications, Documents and Shared.

Any document that Simple Finder users create are automatically saved in their documents folder, and users can only load applications that are allowed (via the Parental Controls preference).

To turn on Simple Finder open the Parental Controls System Preference and select the Simple Finder check box. By Default users will have access to Apple applications, however you can add other applications to this list by ticking more under the 'other' list.

FIREWALL

OS X includes a Firewall which can be enabled to block incoming network connections. Turning on your Firewall can protect your computer from other computers on your local network, or the internet.

To enable your Firewall go to the Security Preference in System Preferences. Click on the 'Firewall' tab and click Start Firewall. If you're happy with the default settings that is all you need to do, but you can add and remove custom programs by clicking on the 'Advanced' button and adding or removing applications. You'll notice that some third party applications may already appear in this list.

There are also two other options; one that lets you automatically allow signed software to receive incoming connections (so any known, trusted application can receive incoming connections) and Stealth Mode, which, if enabled means your computer won't respond or acknowledge attempts to access it from the network, rendering it invisible to malicious threats.

KEEPING YOUR KIDS SAFE ONLINE

Many young Australians are technologically savvy but are unaware about the dangers of the internet which include cyberstalking, identity theft and phishing. While software is available to help kids stay safe online the best approach remains pro-active education about the risks of the Internet.

NetAlert (www.netalert.gov.au), Australia's government-funded internet-safety advisory body, recently conducted a survey and found that almost 50 percent of children surveyed had been approached by a stranger over the internet to meet in real life. Of those children who agreed to meet with a stranger, only 10 percent asked permission from their parents first.

Additionally, another survey conducted by the same organisation found that a third of parents have concerns about key issues such as cyberbullying, their children being approached by strangers in chat rooms, and online security.

Instant Messaging is a form of real-time communication between two or more people based on typed text. There are many different IM protocols available but the most popular are AIM and MSN, with 53 million and 29 million active users respectively. Mac OS X comes with iChat, which is capable of AIM chat. MSN is available from Microsoft as a free download.

The phenomenon of internet chat rooms and instant messenger software has grown dramatically in the past few years. According to Roy Morgan Research over 45 percent of all 12 and 13 year olds now use chat rooms to talk to friends and the numbers are still growing rapidly. The heaviest users of chat rooms are girls aged 13, living in capital cities, with over 67 percent of them chatting on the internet regularly. Chat rooms are easily accessible by any internet user and as such are fast becoming hunting grounds for paedophiles and other predators.

According to NetAlert, to help keep your kids safe online you should also:

- Keep your computer in a family area.
- Supervise your children on the internet. Make rules about what is appropriate internet use for your family and stick to them.
- Educate yourself and your children about potential dangers online and how to make the right choices about online behaviour.
- Equip your family with online protection by installing a free internet content filter.

Finally, the Cybersmart website (www.cybersmart.gov.au) provides practical information and advice on how to keep children and your family safe online.

KEEP AN EYE OUT

Even if you trust your children, you might feel better if you can track their activities (and, even better, if you tell them you're doing so). Parental Controls' logs provide some monitoring options, but you can take this even further.

If you and your child have separate Macs, you can watch his or her screen via Leopard and Snow Leopard's Screen Sharing feature. First log on to your kid's Mac as an administrator and switch on Screen Sharing in the Sharing preference pane. In Allow Access For, select Only These Users, click on the plus-sign button, and choose Administrators.

To observe, go back to your Mac and, from the Finder, choose Go > Network. Locate the name of your kid's Mac, launch it, and click on Share Screen. You can now see what he or she is doing – and even control it. Your child can try to cut you off (by choosing Disconnect, and then your Mac's IP address, from the Screen Sharing menu in the menu bar), but you'll still remain connected.

If your family shares a single Mac, SpectorSoft's US\$170 (about \$185) Spector Pro Mac takes hundreds of snapshots of the screen every hour and can log keystrokes without your children's knowledge. When you want to see what your kids were doing while using the computer, launch the program, play back the snapshots as a movie, or look at the keystroke log.

STOP FILE SHARING

For kids, it may be hard to resist the appeal of downloading free music and videos (and just as hard to understand the

legal issues). But if you'd rather not have the recording industry's lawyers banging on your door, you'll want to put an end to any peer-to-peer file-sharing.

Open the Security preference pane, click on the Firewall tab, and select the Allow Only Essential Services option. However, there's a downside in that this will also disable screen sharing, file sharing, and other such services. If that's too limiting, choose Set Access For Specific Services And Applications instead, which keeps all enabled sharing services running.

If you're concerned that your kids are doing illegal swapping, tell the firewall to block incoming connections from any file-sharing programs on the Mac (click on the plus sign to add the program, and from the pull-down menu to the right, select Block Incoming Connections). Better yet, remove those programs altogether.

Some BitTorrent clients use port forwarding to work around the firewall, which means you can't stop downloads, no matter which firewall setting you choose.

To see whether your kids have been downloading files using a BitTorrent client, click on the Advanced button at the bottom of the Security window and check the Enable Firewall Logging option.

Select the Open Log button to view a list of activities. If you see entries for BitTorrent clients (such as isoHunt, Mininova or BitTorrent), you can uninstall them.

— *Additional reporting by Christopher Breen.*

THE LINGO

If you've ever watched your kids use MSN or AIM you might have seen them typing in a language which doesn't make sense to you. This is a common example of a conversation:


"Hi, afaik ur crzy, but ily anyway, don't tel your parnts b/c i wuw h b/c ur phat, u c%d mmamp if u wnt, we c%d kotl then"

Which translates to:

"Hi, as far as I know you are crazy, but I love you anyway, don't tell your parents because I wish you were here because you are pretty hot and tempting, u could meet me at my place if u want, we could kiss on the lips then."

Here are some other examples:

- A/S/L – Age/sex/location
- AISI – As I see it
- F2F – Face-to-face
- HAK – Hugs and kisses
- HB – Hurry back
- IYKWIM – If you know what I mean
- ROTFL or ROFL or ROTF – Rolling on the floor laughing
- SWDYT – So what do you think?
- YGBK – You've gotta be kidding



SOFTWARE
CHRIS OATEN

Aperture put on notice

I am a big fan of Aperture, but over the last couple of months I've been looking at the beta of Adobe's Lightroom 3 and the grass on that side of the fence is looking very green indeed.

But first, a little background. Both Aperture and Lightroom address the needs of a specific type of user – the DSLR shooter whose workflow is highly reliant on capturing RAW images, though there's no reason you can't manage any kind of common image format.

The thing with RAW files is that because of their size, you don't want to create multiple copies of them. What Aperture and Lightroom do that normal image editors don't is leave the original RAW file intact while displaying edits to the file in an image preview. You create a duplicate version (JPEG or TIFF, usually) of the edited RAW file only at the export stage. This conserves disk space while speeding the editing process.

And this is where the L3 beta is beckoning me with a big dose of hard-to-resist come-hitherness. It's speedy and responsive and makes the current version of Aperture (2.1.4) feel awkward and frumpy.

Most amazing is that despite its beta status, L3 is in pretty good shape. I encountered only a few issues while using it, the worst of which was that it tends to re-send images to the print queue. Other minor issues will for now remain forgiven due to the beta status.

Functionality-wise, L3 is quite a different beast to Aperture, even though each aspires to the same objective. Lightroom presents a set of modules that clearly define the workflow – Library, Develop, Slideshow, Print and Web.

The first of two of L3's modules that knock Aperture for six is the Develop module. That Adobe can deliver better tools for adjusting tone curves and tweaking colour

balance and so on should come as no surprise. It is, after all, the same company that brings you Photoshop.

Where Apple could take some tips from Adobe is in tool grouping. For instance, at the very top of L3's Develop tool palette are the cropping tools. In Aperture, you invoke the crop tool and a small floating palette appears to select your sizing options, but you often have to hunt for it. In Lightroom, you select the crop tool, define your options, and then apply the crop. It's the opposite way of doing things, but it works better.

Furthermore, grouped with the crop tool is the spot heal, red eye, masking, and adjustment brush tools, and this is a logical way of grouping them, as opposed to Aperture where the same tools (bar masking, which Aperture can't do) are scattered.

The other winning aspect of Lightroom is the Print module. Aperture fails in this regard, but Lightroom really makes it a snap to optimise a single sheet of any size paper to print a package of mixed image sizes, along with watermarking and other useful tools. It puts Aperture to shame.

However, from my chair, Aperture's project-based library is still king when it comes to managing files, even if it still doesn't support non-local drives. So I'm sticking with it. For now.

Lightroom Beta 3 is fully functional until April 30 and can be downloaded from Adobe (labs.adobe.com) but you'll need an Adobe membership.

Apple, you're on notice. You've got until then to come up with a new version of Aperture that provides your loyal pro users with the responsiveness and features that Lightroom is presenting in beta form. Focus, Apple. Focus.

Functionality-wise, L3 is quite a different beast to Aperture."



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MUSIC



MOVIES

BEAUTIFUL MESS – LIVE ON EARTH

By Jason Mraz
Atlantic/Warner

Jason Mraz is one of those singers who sounds just as good – if not better – live than in the studio. Recorded in Chicago last year, this is a CD/DVD double set that shows Mraz at his versatile best – folk, rock, pop, a bit of jazz, funk and hip-hop – even a Lionel Richie cover. My highlight has to be Mraz's reggae version of *The Remedy*. – DB

**THE FALL**

By Norah Jones
Blue Note/EMI

Since 2002, Norah Jones's breathy crooning has been the soundtrack to countless swanky dinner parties and fumbling attempted seductions. She has clearly seen no need to change the formula for album No.4. Although *The Fall* is undeniably pleasant, it rarely demands your full attention and is most likely destined to serve as gently warming background music in upscale cafes. – TM

**PLATINUM COLLECTION**

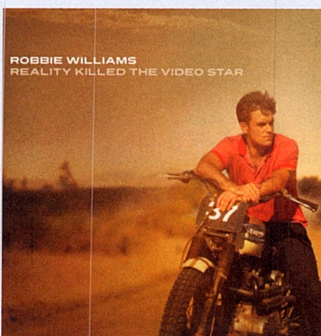
By Enigma
EMI

In 1990, long before electronic music made its way out of the darkness, Romanian-born Michael Cretu founded Enigma, pioneering the evolution of electronica and selling over 50 million albums. This three-disc retrospective of Enigma's best-known meshes of beats, synths and chanting is aimed squarely at the fans; newcomers may find that it takes itself a little too seriously. – TM

**REALITY KILLED THE VIDEO STAR**

By Robbie Williams
Virgin

I have to say that Robbie Williams isn't my favourite performer. But if you're a fan you'll love the fact he's back with his long-anticipated album. The styles vary a lot, though the common thread is still Williams' penchant for big orchestration and power ballads. There are moments of brilliance that should appeal to a wide audience. – DB

**G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA**

Paramount

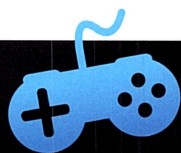
This is a sci-fi action thriller that starts with guns blazing and never lets up. Based, as you'd expect, on the G.I. Joe comics, it's looked at all the most fantastic scenes from previous action movies and put them all together in a rollicking 118 minutes. The Blu-ray copy is class-leading for sharpness, depth, over-emphasised, comic-book colour and special effects. – DB

**HOME IMPROVEMENT (8TH SEASON)**

Buena Vista Entertainment

Anyone who followed the antics of Tim 'The Toolman' Taylor from 1991 to 1999 will love this multi-disc DVD of the eighth and final season. The show, following the life of TV star Tim (Tim Allen), his family and his sidekick Al, was one of the most successful sitcoms ever and, unlike so many others, managed to remain funny until the end. – DB





GAMES

Reviews by Dave Bullard,
Tyler Mathes, Rob Griffiths,
Tim Mercer (TM2)
and James Savage

ADVENTURES OF POWER

Madman

A loser movie in the same mould as *Napoleon Dynamite* but far, far better, *Adventures of Power* follows the fortunes of Power (Ari Gold), an air drummer ridiculed by all. After discovering a sub-culture of air-drummers he realises he's not alone – and actually has the power to save the world (and the mine workers in his hometown). It's funny, heartwarming and cringeworthy. – DB



BALIBO

Madman

"In 1975, the small nation of East Timor declared independence after 400 years of Portuguese colonial rule. Nine days later, Indonesia invaded East Timor." Thus begins this extraordinary movie about the killing of five Aussie-based journos by Indonesian troops desperate to stop the truth leaking out. Beautifully shot. Brilliantly acted. A ripper of a film. – DB



GOURMANIA

PLATFORM: iPhone/iPod touch PUBLISHER: Alawar Entertainment

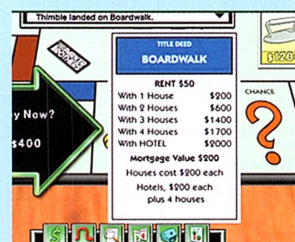
Gourmania is to casual cooking games what the *Iron Chef* is to gourmet cuisine – a madcap dash against time that centres vaguely around the preparation of food. Testing players with time management and ingredient scavenging in the world's most poorly organised kitchens, it's a challenging and occasionally fun casual game. **Price: \$1.19** – JS



MONOPOLY

PLATFORM: iPhone/iPod touch PUBLISHER: EA Mobile

The classic capitalistic board game Monopoly (the US version) has finally made its way to the iPhone. Build a hotel. Buy all the stations. Form a property empire. All of the classic game elements are here. There's even the ability to create house rules. The interface is both well-designed and easy to use, and there are three play modes including local Wi-Fi/Bluetooth multiplayer. **Price: \$5.99** – TM2



SPIDER: THE SECRET OF BRYCE MANOR

PLATFORM: iPhone/iPod touch PUBLISHER: Tiger Style Games

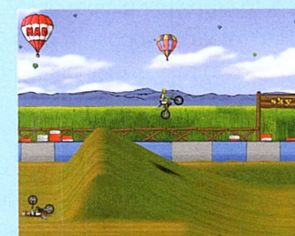
In an App Store full of games adapted to fit the iPhone, it is wonderful to find a game designed specifically for the iPhone's unique interface. You play a spider in an abandoned mansion and have to search for clues about the family who lived there and why they left. It strikes a perfect balance of mystery, strategy, and discovery in a beautifully designed world for you to explore. **Price: \$3.99** – JS

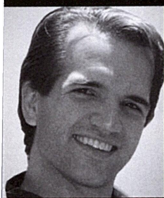


MAD SKILLS MOTOCROSS

PLATFORM: Mac PUBLISHER: Turborilla

This side-scrolling motocross racing title is a fun, easy-to-play yet challenging-to-master casual game. You race on well-designed tracks, earning gold stars by performing tricks. Controls are basic, the graphics are quite nice and the sound effects are wonderful – but the star is the incredible physics engine. It's worth a look. Download from www.madskillsmotocross.com. **Price: US\$25.95 (about \$29)** – RG





SWITCHER SENSEI
DAVID BRAUE

More than just a Preview

Although all Macs ship with the quite capable iPhoto, it's not the only way to manage and edit your photos. While you've probably discovered Finder's Quick Look feature (hit space when a file is highlighted), Mac OS X also makes it a breeze to not only view but colour-correct images, annotate and reorganise PDFs, and more.

Double-click on an image in Windows XP and it opens in the Windows Picture and Fax Viewer application, which offers little more than rotating features. Do the same in Windows Vista, and the Windows Photo Gallery application lets you print, email, burn a slideshow, and adjust exposure, colour, cropping, and red eye via the 'Fix' menu. Neither supports PDFs, which in Windows require the Adobe Acrobat Reader.

By contrast, double-click on images or PDFs in Mac OS X and they're opened in Preview, a deceptively simple application that not only enables viewing of images but also provides a range of colour correction and PDF editing tools you could only get on Windows with standalone commercial packages.

Try it: double-click on an image file within Finder and Preview pops up with your image loaded. Zoom in and out using the \mathbb{H} button with the '+' and '-' keys. Use \mathbb{H} -3 or click-and-drag to make a selection box, then do \mathbb{H} -K to crop your picture or \mathbb{H} -L and R to rotate it. Choose Tools > Adjust Size to resize, or Tools > Flip Horizontal or > Vertical to flip.

To retouch, choose Tools > Adjust Color or type \mathbb{H} -Option-C. Up pops a palette of tools for exposure, contrast, saturation, tint, sharpness and sepia. Adjust levels manually or



Preview provides a range of colour correction and PDF editing tools you could only get on Windows with standalone commercial packages."


pick 'Auto Levels'. When your image looks right, type \mathbb{H} -S to save your file, or Shift- \mathbb{H} -S to save a copy.

Preview's annotation tools make it easy to add visual elements to images. Click Annotate or Tools > Annotate, and you can add arrows, ovals, rectangles, and text using \mathbb{H} -Control-A, O, R, or T respectively or by clicking on the toolbar at the bottom of the Preview window. \mathbb{H} -T toggles the font window for control over your text and its colour.

Open a PDF in Preview, and you have different options. Colour correcting no longer functions, but you get the option of drawing arrows, ovals, and rectangles as well as text boxes, adding annotations as notes (\mathbb{H} -Control-N) or links (\mathbb{H} -Control-L) within the document or to a URL.

You can also highlight, strike through, or underline the PDF text (\mathbb{H} -Control-H, S and U). The Snow Leopard version of Preview can even correctly copy text from columns.

Also worth mentioning is the Sidebar (\mathbb{H} -Shift-D) – a tray that contains thumbnails of open images or PDF pages, and has other uses too.

Click on a page of a multi-page PDF and press DEL to delete it, or drag-and-drop pages to change their order. Open two or more PDFs at the same time, and you can drag and drop pages between the windows' sidebars to combine or completely restructure your documents. Save the new document and you've completed edits that require separate commercial packages in Windows. 

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Offer expires 28/01/2010

Clean up your iTunes library

It's a good bet that your iTunes library is in need of some work. CHRISTOPHER BREEN shows how to remove duplicate tracks, fix mis-tagged songs, and more.

If you're a big user of digital music, chances are your iTunes library is untidy at best – strewn with duplicates, mismatched tags, and missing or incorrect artwork.

iTunes offers very little help in this regard – just a limited Show Duplicates command, which separates twin files by track title and artist only. If you have a track that includes studio, live, outtake, and remix versions, iTunes is likely to term them all duplicates.

This is not very helpful unless you enjoy sifting through long lists of tracks so that you can toss the few true duplicates. No, for this kind of job and others – such as correcting ID3 tags and supplying accurate cover art – you need better tools.

below. **Dupin.** When it comes to locating and weeding out duplicate tracks in iTunes, Doug Adams's Dupin does a great job. It can even consolidate play, skip, and ratings information from the duplicate tracks.

DUPIN

If something can be done to iTunes or an iPod via AppleScript or Automator, odds are Doug Adams will offer the way. His US\$15 (about \$16.50) Dupin helps you locate and weed out duplicate tracks. Found at dougscrips.com/itunes, Dupin filters

an iTunes library by using a broad set of criteria including Name, Artist, Album, Time, Size, Track Number, Disk Number, Sample Rate, Bit Rate, and Kind. Once it finds duplicates, it gives you many ways to determine which tracks to keep – such as recently played, highest bit rate and newest date added.

Unlike iTunes, Dupin can search individual playlists as well as your entire library. A new addition is the



The program's 'Inconsistent' feature helps you assign consistent names to albums and artists – 'The Rolling Stones' vs 'Rolling Stones', say."

ability to consolidate play, skip, and ratings info from the duplicate tracks into the track you intend to keep.

SONG SERGEANT

LairWare's US\$20 (about \$22) Song Sergeant (www.lairware.com) not only goes after duplicate tracks but also locates tracks with inconsistent artist and album names, as well as orphaned tracks – those that are still in your iTunes library folder but that iTunes no longer keeps track of. (This can happen when you delete tracks from iTunes but don't then trash them.)

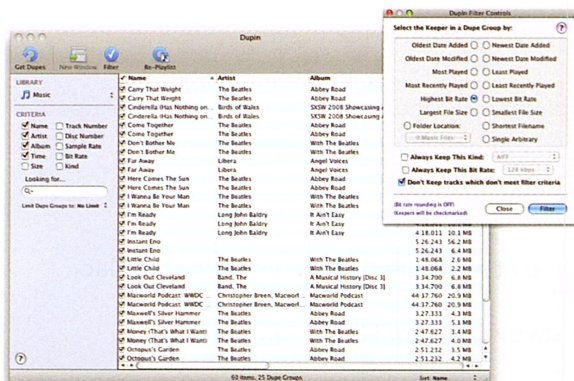
Song Sergeant uses fewer search criteria than Dupin – Track Title, Artist Name, Duration, Album Title, File Kind, and File Size – but those should be enough to locate most, if not all, of your iTunes library's duplicate tracks.

Song Sergeant prioritises tracks in two ways. The first is by their ID3 tags – most complete, most played, most recently played, and so on. You also filter audio data by quality, rating, duration or file type.

When the program identifies duplicates, it automatically selects tracks based on the filters you've set. You choose those that you believe aren't duplicates and then click Merge Marked to remove the duplicate files. (Duplicate tracks can be sent to the Trash or to another folder.)

The 'merge' part of this command means that if a duplicate has better tagging than the version you want to keep, that information will be merged with the kept track.

The program's 'Inconsistent' feature helps you assign consistent



names to albums and artists – 'The Rolling Stones' vs 'Rolling Stones', say. Song Sergeant will offer a preferred name, though you can overrule it. When names are to your liking, click Rename Selected As Preferred. As for orphan files, choose the ones you want to add to iTunes and click the Add Selected To iTunes button. Select those you don't want and click Trash Selected.

TUNEUP

TuneUp, from TuneUp Media (www.tuneupmedia.com), is an iTunes utility of a different stripe. Rather than looking for duplicate and missing files, it attempts to clean up your tracks by locating and applying the correct tags and album art to them. It costs US\$30 (about \$33) for a lifetime licence and US\$20 (about \$22) for a yearly one.


TuneUp scans your music library and gives you some idea of the state of its tags. To clean up your library, you drag up to 500 tracks at a time into the TuneUp window that attaches itself to the iTunes window.

TuneUp connects to the TuneUp server – which uses GraceNotes' database to analyse and properly tag your tracks – and begins analysing your music's metadata.

TuneUp then groups the tracks into three categories, separated by album – Matches (those it's very sure about), Likely Matches (those it's pretty sure about), and Not Found (those it's stumped by). You can accept all its changes by clicking Save All, or you can choose each entry individually.

For each album entry, you can see which tracks are in your iTunes library (and which are missing) and choose alternate cover art. If you discover an album is missing tracks, a click takes you to the iTunes Store.

Speaking of cover art, TuneUp has a separate function that looks for tracks that are missing artwork.

TuneUp also includes a Tuniverse feature that links to related YouTube videos, bios, album recommendations and merchandise (offered through eBay) for the currently playing artist. 

WORKING WITH ITUNES WINDOWS

Most people see iTunes as a single-window program – when you click an item in the sidebar, the main window's content changes. But you may not realise that iTunes lets you use multiple windows, each for a different purpose.

For starters, you can open any item in the sidebar (other than devices or the Music library) in a new window by double-clicking its icon, or by Control-clicking and choosing 'Open in New Window'.

This allows you to more easily look at multiple playlists, and to copy music from one playlist to another more flexibly: You can drag songs into specific locations in other playlists, instead of just adding them to the ends of each one.

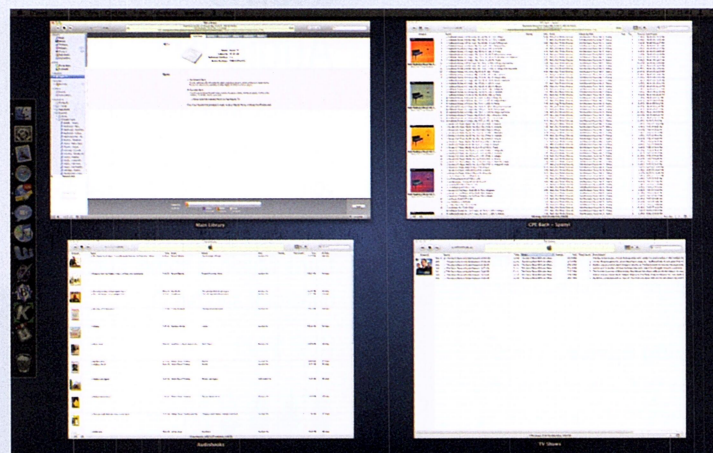
If your windows are small enough – or your screen is large enough – you can just drag from one playlist window to another. But you can also use Exposé: Select one or several tracks, start dragging them until you see a small green plus (+) icon, then invoke Exposé's Application Windows function (F10 by default). Keep holding your mouse button down; you can now move your cursor over another window, release the Exposé key, and drag the tracks to where you want them.

Windows you have open when you quit will reopen the next time you launch the program, so you could, say, always keep the iTunes Store open in a separate window.

iTunes lets you choose whether to use its own window to play back videos or to view them in a new window. In iTunes' Playback preferences, you can choose video playback options for music videos, and for movies and TV shows.

You can choose to play videos in the artwork viewer, in the main iTunes window (filling the window), in a separate window, in full-screen mode, or full screen with visuals (which works only with playlists that contain both videos and music).

In addition to opening the iTunes Store in its own window, you can also have it automatically fill the iTunes window whenever you click it. Go to the Store preferences and select the Use Full Window For iTunes Store option. When next you click iTunes Store, the sidebar will slide out of the way.



left. **Multiple windows.** Why limit iTunes to just one window when it can do so much more?

Philips SBD8100

Philips, www.philips.com.au

Pros Good looks; nice sound for the price; motorised rotating dock

Cons Bass booster made no discernible difference

RRP \$249.95



All in a spin

Philips has been a little quiet in the AV space for a while, so it was good when this new release was dropped off at Niche HQ. The SBD8100 is an interesting iPod/iPhone dock in a couple of ways. First, its design lets it be set horizontally on a surface, or carried vertically. And, second, it has a motorised swivelling dock set into the middle of the front plate.

This either lets the iPod or iPhone sit upright when being carried by one of the side handles (it's mains or battery-powered) or, when it's standing on a surface, it allows you to rotate your iPod touch or iPhone to the horizontal position to watch movies. It's a bit of a gimmick, really, but it's very cool to touch a button on the remote and see the dock rotate.

On the unit are controls for power, volume, Dynamic Bass Boost (DBB) and backlight. The SBD8100's speakers are shielded from mobile phone interference, and when a call comes in on your phone it mutes the music and plays your ringtone through the speakers. You can hit your iPhone's Speaker button to take the call through the SBD8100.

Sound-wise, this system is a more-than-pleasant surprise. iPod speaker systems at sub-\$300 prices have a habit of sounding thin and tinny, but the SBD8100 has a well-rounded sound thanks in no small part to Philips' use of a Class D amplifier instead of the more usual AB.

Listenability is the yardstick at this price, and this model lets you listen to any genre without fatigue. The onboard DBB is said to electronically boost lower frequencies, but for the life of me I couldn't hear any difference between On and Off.

Australian Macworld's buying advice: A nice all-rounder. The SBD8100 has good sound, is very portable, looks good ... and has that cool dock.

— DAVE BULLARD

Decompression chamber

iHome promises to restore lost audio data

Over the past few years, most of us have made a musical sacrifice: We've switched from listening to CDs to listening to MP3 and AAC files, and in the process we've lost some of the nuances of the music in order to have easily portable digital tunes.

But what if you could have your MP3s and your high-quality audio, too? That's the promise of iHome's iP1, an iPod speaker dock that claims to restore what compression technologies like MP3 take out.

iHome says that the iP1 uses "a complex chip-based algorithm" developed by Bongiovi Acoustics to restore "harmonics, brightness, clarity and presence" while also boosting the bass. How well does the technology work? To my ears, it sometimes works a little too well.

There's no doubt that engaging the algorithm makes a big difference. The volume jumps up, and both bass and treble become more pronounced. iHome says that the iP1 boasts 100W of power distributed

among four speakers; but I found that without the B button on, the iP1 wouldn't be loud enough to drive any self-respecting party.

With rock and pop music especially, using the algorithm can have a good effect. But I found it harsh and unnatural on a jazz piece like Dexter Gordon's version of *Don't Explain*. The sound of brushes on cymbals was so bright and distinct that I found it grating.

The iP1 has a sleek, modern design that I like, but it won't necessarily be everyone's cup of tea. The dock's two 4in woofers and two 1in tweeters are stuck through a plate of smoky plastic, with the backs of the speakers on display. The arrangement does provide more separation between the speakers than you find in many iPod docks, and that seems to contribute to good voicing between different instruments.

The iP1 will accommodate any iPhone and any dockable iPod. If you don't have an iPod or iPhone, you can plug anything with a headphone jack into the back of the iP1. The unit also has component- and composite-video outlets, so you can send video from your iPod to your TV.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. The iP1 is visually striking, and its digital enhancement of compressed music is helpful with some genres.

— EDWARD N. ALBRO

iHome Audio iP1

Conexus, www.conexus.com.au

Pros Striking design; good voicing; enhancement sounds good with rock and pop music.

Cons Music is sometimes unnatural and harsh.

RRP \$499



Studio Sound Quality



A-  **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**
iLounge.com | All Things iPod

"...the best overall iPod and iPhone audio system currently available at its price point"
iLounge

"Looks sleek, sounds sweet"
New York Magazine

"The amount of added detail is astounding"
Playboy

iHome
STUDIO SERIES
FEATURING BONGIOVI ACOUSTICS DPS

The iHome® Studio Series is the first ever home audio system to feature the Bongiovi Acoustics Digital Power Station. This **patented technology**, developed by music industry professionals, constantly scans your audio to **restore harmonics and clarity**, typically lost to compression.

The Studio Series iP1, featuring **100 watts of power**, will fill your room with stunning sound and make your iPod/iPhone video come alive on any TV. Protective speaker grilles included.

The iHome Studio Series. Hear music as it was meant to sound.

iHome is a registered trademark of SDI Technologies, Inc. iPod is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. iPhone is a trademark of Apple Inc. Bongiovi Acoustics, Digital Power Station, and the DPS symbol are trademarks or registered trademarks of Bongiovi Acoustics, LLC.

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www.ihomeaudio.com/iP1

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iPHONE

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Sports crazy

Australia in England	
England	Complete
228	9
Over	48.3
4	230
Australia won by 6 wickets	
Batting: Australia	
Player	R · B · M · 4 · 6 · SR
Ferguson, C	19 17 23 3 0 111.76
Hussey, M	8 4 6 2 0 200.00
Bowling: England	
Player	O · W · R · M · Econ · Extras
Anderson, J	9.3 1 52 1 5.47 1w 0nb
Wright, L	9 1 30 1 3.33 0w 0nb
W	1lb
1	4 4

Matches	
Current Matches	
There are no current matches	
Upcoming Matches	
India vs Sri Lanka	1st Test 16-20 Nov 2009
Scheduled start in 4 hours	
Last Updated 14 hours ago	
Recently Completed Matches	
South Africa vs England	2nd T20 15 Nov 2009
South Africa won by 84 runs	
Last Updated 9 hours ago	
South Africa vs England	1st T20 14 Nov 2009
England won by 1 run	
Last Updated Fri, 13 Nov 2009 08:21	

Cricket. iCricket, the No.1 Cricket App on iTunes provides live scores, video highlights and video feeds (be mindful of your data allowance). iCricket (free) also gives push notifications automatically every 10 overs or when a wicket falls.

Or look at Virtual Cricket (\$2.49), which provides Cricket fans with live scorecards for Tests, One-Day Internationals, Twenty 20, Indian Premier League and Indian Cricket League. Push Notifications provide live score updates and commentary alerts.

The app also has other fun things to do while you're waiting for some action, like a Cricket Trivia Quiz and

If you're a sports fan, chances are there's at least one app that will help you track live scores and team info when you can't be at the game.

By my calculation there are now over 2500 apps in the sports category; the problem isn't finding an app for your sport, it's finding the right one!

If you'd rather have a general sports app try the free Eurosport app or Fox Sports. Both provides results, fixtures and live information for football (round ball), tennis, F1, basketball, cycling and others.

According to official government statistics, in 2005-06, the five most popular sports in terms of crowd attendance were AFL, motorsport, rugby league and cricket. Here are my suggestions for the best apps for each of those categories:

AFL. Last AFL season there were two apps that provided live scores and ladder feeds. Nearing the 2010 season, there are seven apps that all do essentially the same thing.

The two that have the most promise are the paid Official AFL

Cricket Lite Free features a great looking, fully detailed scoreboard."

app from Telstra and free Footy Lite from the Slattery Media Group, which produces the Footy Record.

Motorsport. This is a broad category. If you're an F1 fan you'll want to have F1 Timing App – 2010 Championship Pass (\$36.99). This gives you access to live timing and track positioning for all sessions.

The live positions feature displays the running cars on a 3D map, and lets you zoom in on the action. You can also get live time information; the same information that engineers have access to in the pits.

If your preferred motor sport is V8 check out the V8 Supercars News app \$1.19 which provides news and results from the V8 Supercars Championship. The Supercars app features offline access, so you can read stories while in Airplane mode, and lets you email links and stories.

full offline browsing mode that enables you to see previously viewed scores, comments, news and quiz questions.

Cricket Lite Free from Slattery Media Group provides up-to-the-minute scores of all international and domestic matches and features a great looking, fully detailed scoreboard.

Rugby League. Rugby League Live features Live Scores plus live stats on the game play including Live try scorers and live ladder updates. It even makes refreshing the scores fun; to refresh, simply shake.

The layout and UI works well, and information comes straight from Champion Data so you can rest assured that it's accurate.

NRL Footy News (\$1.19) provides everything but live scores including information about your team, last game results, next game details, news and ladder position.

Give your iPhone more than double the juice.

Finally, 1800 mAh in a pocket-size backup battery!

by Richard Thalheimer

Thinking of getting a backup battery for your iPhone or iPod?

The new RichardSolo 1800 has capacity and features that distinguish it from the competition.

Large 1800 mAh capacity will charge the iPhone completely to full, with more power left over for later charging.

Just snap it on — no cable required! Even fits with all cases.

110-240v AC wall charger included for fast charging. And, you can use the iPhone while charging it, and you can charge the RichardSolo 1800 and iPhone together at the same time, with the included USB cable, AC wall charger, or USB car charger — like getting two extra chargers for free! You can also use your Apple AC wall charger to charge both together.

The dual-port USB car charger will charge the RichardSolo 1800 and power another device. The RichardSolo 1800 also features a built-in laser pointer, and super bright LED flashlight, with lock button to prevent accidental use.

For iPhone, sturdy support brace holds iPhone and RichardSolo 1800 securely together. And, this is the only snap-on battery available with an actual iPhone latching mechanism, to keep the RichardSolo 1800 and iPhone firmly attached.

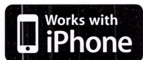


This polymerized lithium-ion battery takes hundreds and hundreds of charges. Three LED lights indicate charge status. The RichardSolo 1800 works with iPhone 2G/3G, and all iPod models except shuffle.

This is an extremely handy, pocket-sized solution to keep your iPhone or iPod going all day — and night! You will be absolutely delighted. That is my promise, and you can depend on it.

\$50.00 for one or \$90.00 for two

Hours of use may vary, depends upon many factors, including type of use, network, and connection speed. iPod is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. iPhone is a trademark of Apple Inc. Free items require purchase.



Built-in super bright LED flashlight.



Built-in laser pointer.

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USB CAR
CHARGER**

**BUILT-IN
SUPER
BRIGHT LED
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**BUILT-IN
LASER
POINTER**

**FREE
AC WALL
CHARGER**



iPhone 3G
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80GB 160GB



iPhone
4GB 8GB 16GB



iPod nano
2nd generation (aluminum)
2GB 4GB 8GB



iPod touch
8GB 16GB 32GB



iPod
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30GB 60GB 80GB



iPod nano
3rd generation (video)
4GB 8GB



iPod nano
1st generation
1GB 2GB 4GB

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www.RichardSolo.com



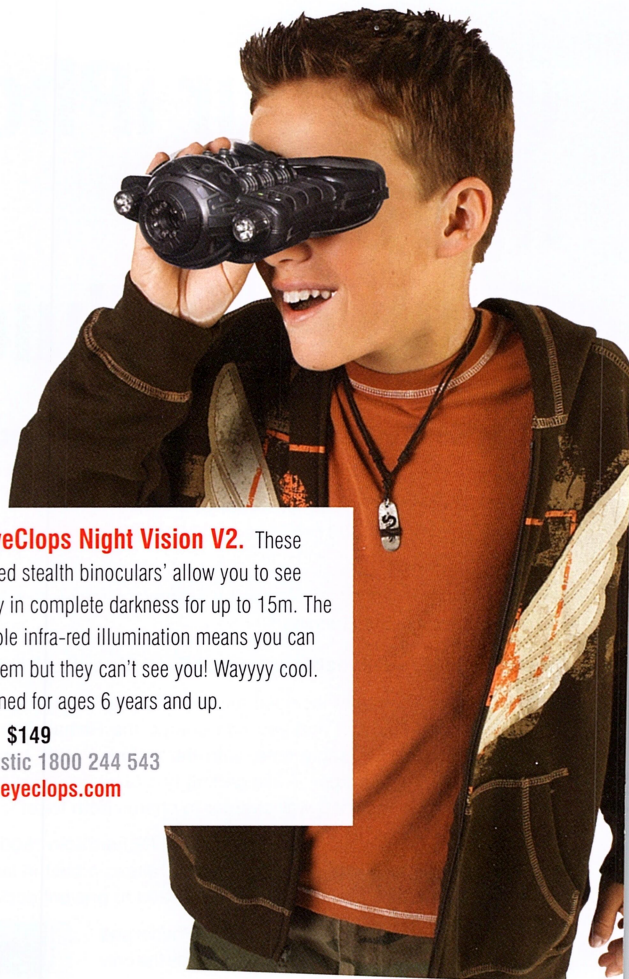
For orders in Australia:
www.ucc-online.com.au/RichardSoloLaser
email: richardsolo@uccaustralia.com.au
phone: 02 9725 5354



← **Moshi Kids' Volume Restricted Headphones.** Just like the name says, these headphones are volume-restricted to prevent possible damage to children's hearing, while still providing clear and dynamic sound. Available in pink, blue, green and red.

RRP: \$29.99

Lomis International
www.lomis.com.au



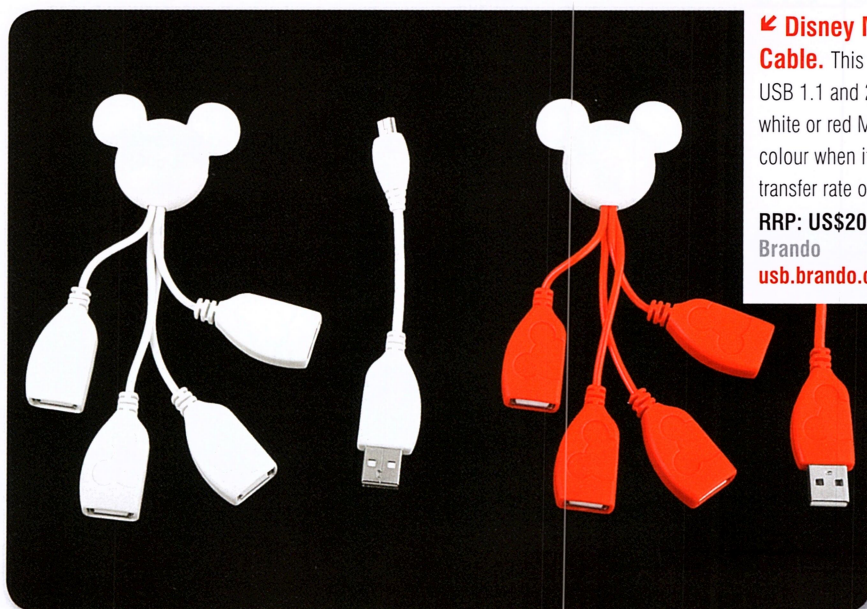
➔ **EyeClops Night Vision V2.** These 'infrared stealth binoculars' allow you to see clearly in complete darkness for up to 15m. The invisible infra-red illumination means you can see them but they can't see you! Wayyyy cool. Designed for ages 6 years and up.

RRP: \$149

Funtastic 1800 244 543
www.eyeclops.com

Kid's GADGET GUIDE

Gear, gizmos and goodies
for the little ones.



➔ **Disney Mickey USB 4-Port Hub Cable.** This gadget allows kids to connect four USB 1.1 and 2.0 devices at the same time. The white or red Mickey Head lights up and changes colour when it is connected to a Mac. It has a data transfer rate of 480Mbps.

RRP: US\$20 (about \$22) + shipping
Brando
usb.brando.com



➔ **Cherry Startaboard.** Designed to help young children become accustomed to using computers, the Startaboard has colour-coded oversized keys: Red for numbers, green for consonants, purple for vowels, orange for punctuation and blue for cursor control.

RRP: TBA
Cherry, (03) 9761 7844
www.cherrycorp.com



↑ **Laser Corporation iPig.** Part of the new iRange, the iPig Docking Station is compatible with most iPods and other portable media devices, and features an adjustable sub-woofer and 360-degree sound. Available in white, black and pink from Big W.

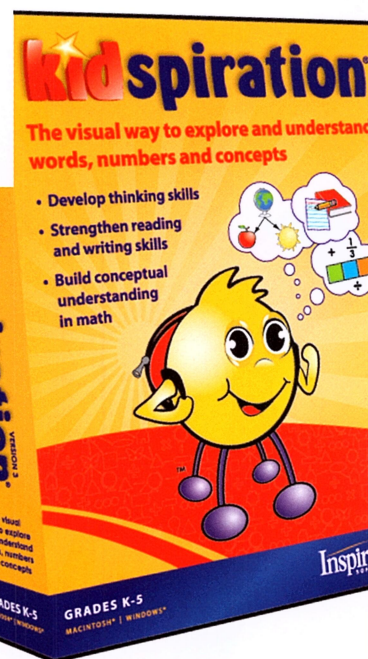
RRP: \$99.95
Laser Corporation
www.laserco.net

↩ **eGo Portable Hard Drive.** Kids are needing to carry around more and more data these days, and they can protect it at the same time with this rugged USB drive. The ultra-slim aluminium enclosure comes in Ruby Red or Silver, and there's a bundled suite of backup software.

RRP: From \$181
Iomega
go.iomega.com

➤ **Inspiration Kidspiration 3.0.** Created for K-5 learners, Kidspiration develops thinking, literacy and numeracy skills using visual learning principles. In reading and writing, it strengthens word recognition, vocabulary, comprehension and written expression. New visual math tools also build reasoning and problem solving skills.

RRP: \$174.95
Conexus
www.conexus.com.au



↩ **Urban Tool grooveRider.** "Wear your sound and operate your iPod directly through a smart fabric interface shirt," says Urban Tool. Made for leisure, sports and travelling, the top is made from a sporty, breathable polyamid/lycra mix. Comes in male and female versions.

RRP: \$169
Urban Tool
www.urbantool.com.au



➔ **Powertraveller powermonkey.** With the \$74.99 powermonkey-classic V2 you can keep your own monkeys entertained for hours. Powermonkeys provide hours of charge to iPods, portable games consoles, MP3 players and much more. The \$149.99 powermonkey-eXplorer adds solar power to the mix..

RRP: \$74.99
Powertraveller

www.powertraveller.com.au

↓ **Disney USB 2.0 Cables.** Disney-themed products are always a hit with the kids, and these are no exception. They're simple USB cable enlivened by *Toy Story*, *Stitch*, *Cars*, *Mickey* or *Princess* embossing.

RRP: US\$7 (about \$7.70) + shipping

Brando

usb.brando.com



➔ **Vestallife Ladybug II Speakers.** The Ladybug II is a colourful way to get the most from your iPod or iPhone. Its unique flip-down wings, digital amp, and built-in subwoofer give you big sound with lots of bass in a small package. Available in metallic red and metallic black.

RRP: \$159.95

Try & Byte

www.tryandbyte.com.au



↑ **Crumpler Baby Anchovy.** Crumpler is now doing little bags for little ones aged three to eight. The Baby Anchovy (pictured) is a scaled-down version of The Seedybar backpack, while The Baby Pea is a mini version of The Yee Ross daypack. Strong and durable, both are available in four bright colours.

RRP: \$75 (The Baby Anchovy);
\$60 (The Baby Pea)

Crumpler

www.crumpler.com.au



← **DigiFrame Fun and Funky.** These 3.5in digital photo frames come in five colours, each with three fun magnet characters to swap around. Most importantly, \$10 from the \$69.95 you pay for each frame is donated to the Bravehearts multimedia campaign 'Ditto's Keep Safe Adventure', which educates parents and children about sexual assault.

RRP: \$69.95

DigiFrame

www.digiframe.com.au

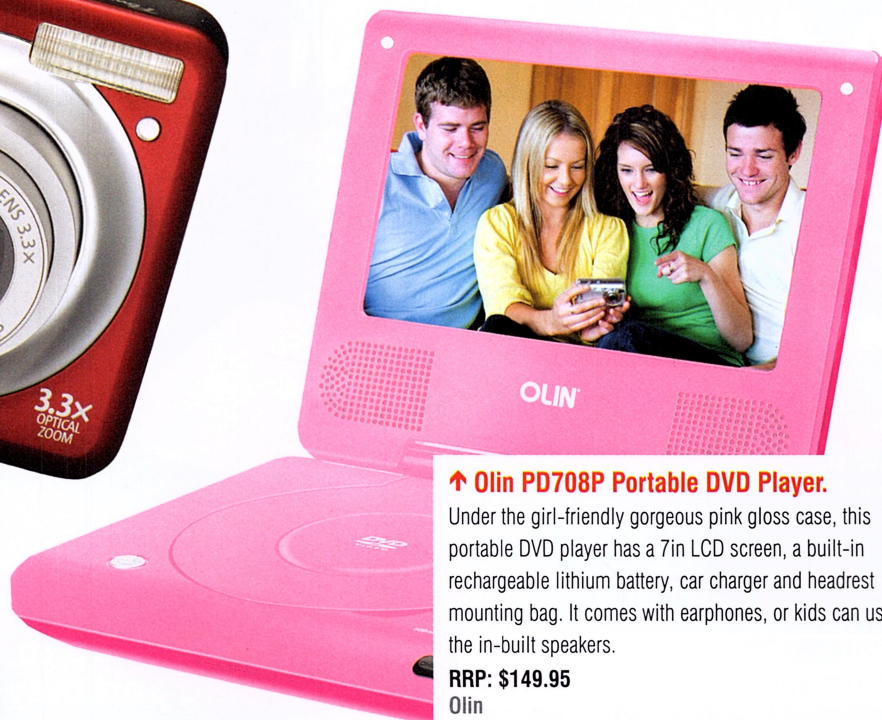


↑ **Canon PowerShot A480.** With features such as face and motion detection and intuitive operation, the new entry-level PowerShot A480 camera is perfect for kids. It's a 10-megapixel model with a 3.3x zoom lens and comes in silver, black, red and blue.

RRP: \$199

Canon

www.canon.com.au



↑ **Olin PD708P Portable DVD Player.**

Under the girl-friendly gorgeous pink gloss case, this portable DVD player has a 7in LCD screen, a built-in rechargeable lithium battery, car charger and headrest mounting bag. It comes with earphones, or kids can use the in-built speakers.

RRP: \$149.95

Olin

olinstyle.com



↓ **Monster Heartbeats by Lady Gaga.**

Lady Gaga, one of the world's hottest female recording artists, has teamed up with Monster to create these earphones. Monster promises "incredible sonic clarity and pounding bass". Designed by Lady Gaga, the jewel-inspired earphones come in Chrome, Rose and Black.

RRP: \$159.95

Convoy International

www.ehifi.com.au



PANASONIC EARPHONES

Panasonic has released a new series of Stereo Earphones in nine fun colours, styled to match the popular iPod Nano. The RP-HJE240s offer crisp, clear sound, boasting a 6Hz-23kHz frequency response and a gold-plated plug. Each comes with three different sized canal-shaped silicone eartips so users can select the perfect fit. And AMW has eight sets, worth \$44.95 each, to give away.

To enter, send an email with the subject line PANASONIC to amwcomp@niche.com.au and answer the question: "What is the frequency response of the RP-HJE240?". (See www.panasonic.com.au for details.) Please also tell us your name and daytime phone number.



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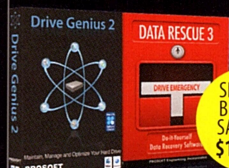


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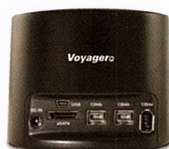
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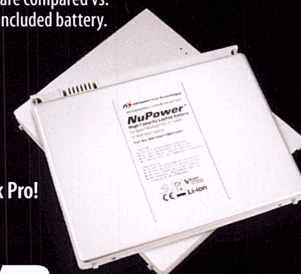
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MIGHTY & MINI

Rounding out our reviews of the latest Apple models that we began last month, here's the lowdown on the top-of-the-line iMac and the Mac mini.





iMAC 27in Core i5 iMac

Apple, www.apple.com.au

Pros Impressive speed; amazingly fast Core i7 option; great image quality from display at any angle; improved speaker system; new SD card slot.

Cons Glare and reflections from screen may frustrate some users; FireWire 400 peripherals require an adapter; Apple Remote not included.

RRP \$2599; \$2889 with i7 processor



When Apple announced new iMacs at the end of last year, it included a major step forward amid the subtle-but-welcome refinements in most of the models: the first ever iMac to offer a quad-core processor.

The new high-end 27in iMacs are the first to use Intel's Core i5 and Core i7 quad-core processors, and they were not available at the time of the announcement. But, let me tell you, they were worth the wait.

There are four standard iMac configurations, three of which have 3.06GHz Core 2 Duo processors and were reviewed last month. The fourth standard configuration is a \$2468 model that has the same 27in screen, 1TB hard drive, and 4GB of RAM as the \$2068 27in 3.06GHz Core 2 Duo iMac, but features a more powerful ATI Radeon HD 4850 graphics card with 512MB of GDDR3 memory and Intel's Core i5 quad-core processor running at 2.66GHz. The Core i5 has 8MB of L3 cache shared among the processing cores.

The Core i5 features a technology Intel calls Turbo Boost. If an application isn't using every available core, the cores that are idle shut off, and the active cores speed up. According to Apple, this allows the processor to run up

to 20 percent faster under heavy workloads; that translates to 3.2GHz in this iMac.

As an upgrade option to the Core i5 iMac, you can swap in a 2.8GHz Core i7 quad-core processor for \$290 more. The Core i7 also features Turbo Boost (for speeds of up to 3.46GHz), and it also has Hyper-Threading technology that can present itself to highly threaded applications as having eight virtual cores.

Performance. To see how well the new quad-core iMacs perform, we ran our overall system performance test suite, Speedmark 6, and the results were quite impressive. In fact, with a Speedmark 6 score of 209, the 2.66GHz Core i5 iMac is the fastest standard configuration Mac we've ever tested. It was three percent faster overall than the 2.66GHz Quad-Core Mac Pro, and 1.5 percent faster overall than the 2.26GHz 8-core Mac Pro.

Comparing the Core i5 iMac's Speedmark 6 scores to its iMac siblings, the Core i5 iMac was 27 percent faster overall than the second-fastest iMac we've tested, the recently

released 21.5in 3.06GHz Core 2 Duo iMac with 1TB hard drive and ATI graphics.

Since the Core i5 iMac has the same hard drive as two of the other three new iMacs, we didn't see a big difference in our file duplication test, and our unzipping test results were pretty flat across the board.

However, we did see a 25 percent improvement in the Core i5 iMac's Compressor score when compared to the 21.5in 3.06GHz iMac, a 26 percent increase in *Call of Duty* frame rates, a whopping 71 percent improvement in our HandBrake test, an 88 percent faster performance in our Cinebench multiple CPU test, and the new Core i5 iMac posted a MathematicaMark score more than twice as high as the 3.06GHz iMac. That's a lot of performance bang for an extra \$400.

Comparing the new Core i5 iMac to the Mac Pro models, we see the speed advantage going the iMac's way in our Zip, iTunes, iMovie export, *Call of Duty* frame rates, and Compressor tests. The Mac Pros stood their ground on our

27-INCH CORE I5 AND 27-INCH CORE I7 IMACS BENCHMARKS

	Speedmark 6	Finder	Finder	Finder	iTunes 09	iMovie 09	iMovie 09	
	SCORE	DUPLICATE 1GB FILE	ZIP 2GB FOLDER	UNZIP 2GB ARCHIVE	AAC TO MP3 ENCODE	IMPORT CAMERA ARCHIVE	SHARE TO ITUNES: MOBILE	
27" iMac 2.66GHz Core i5	209	0:21	3:01	0:43	1:07	1:22	1:03	
27" iMac 2.8GHz Core i7	225	0:20	2:43	0:42	0:59	1:04	0:59	
21.5" iMac 3.06GHz Core 2 Duo (ATI)	164	0:23	2:55	0:43	1:16	2:16	1:18	
27" iMac 3.06GHz Core 2 Duo	162	0:22	3:00	0:39	1:16	2:17	1:16	
24" iMac 2.66GHz Core 2 Duo (early 2009)	134	0:25	3:42	0:51	1:28	1:40	1:53	
Mac Pro 2.66GHz Quad-Core Xeon (3GB RAM)	203	0:22	3:08	0:44	1:10	1:09	1:18	
Mac Pro 2.26GHz 8-Core Xeon (6GB RAM)	206	0:23	3:27	0:41	1:14	0:57	1:24	

Best results are in bold. Reference systems are in italics. How we tested: *Call of Duty* score is in frames per second (higher is better). MathematicaMark is a performance score (higher is better). All other scores are in minutes:seconds (lower is better). Speedmark 6 scores are relative to those of a 2.13GHz Core 2 Duo MacBook, which is assigned a score of 100. All systems were tested with 10.6.1 except for the Core i5 and Core i7 iMacs, which had 10.6.2. All Macs were tested with 4GB of RAM except as noted. We duplicated a 1GB file, created a Zip archive in the Finder from the two 1GB files and then unzipped it. We converted 90 minutes of AAC audio files to MP3 using iTunes' High Quality setting. In iMovie '09, we imported a camera archive and exported it to iTunes using the Mobile Devices setting.

HandBrake, iMovie import test, Cinebench CPU test, and MathematicaMark trials.

Our tests of the built-to-order Core i7 iMac (which, other than the processor, has identical specifications as the stock Core i5 iMac) showed even greater performance prowess. With a Speedmark 6 score of 225, the \$2758 Core i7 iMac was nearly 8 percent faster than the Core i5 iMac. The Core i7 was nearly 11 percent faster than the \$4499 2.66GHz Quad-Core Mac Pro and 9 percent faster than the 2.26GHz 8-Core Mac Pro, which sells for \$1400 more. In our tests, there were a few tasks where having eight physical processing cores was beneficial, like our MathematicaMark and Cinebench CPU tests.

The new quad-core iMacs are outwardly identical to the new 27in 3.06GHz Core 2 Duo iMac. The quad-cores feature a 16:9 LED-lit glass screen, integrated iSight camera, four USB 2.0 ports, one FireWire 800 port, a Mini DisplayPort, and a new SD memory card slot. In terms of connectivity all new iMacs offer gigabit Ethernet, 802.11n wireless

networking, and Bluetooth 2.1 + Enhanced Data Rate. The 27in iMacs ship with a 1TB 7200rpm Serial ATA hard drive, with a 2TB hard drive option available for an extra \$350.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. With the new 2.66GHz Core i5 iMac and the 2.8GHz Core i7 iMac, Apple has not only blurred the line between consumer and professional systems, it's damn near erased it. The 2.66GHz Core i5 iMac offers faster performance at most tasks than the 2.66GHz Quad-Core Mac Pro.

The Core i5 iMac also has more memory and more storage space than the 2.66GHz Quad-Core Mac Pro, while being \$2031 less (plus you get a 27in screen with the iMac). Unless you absolutely require additional PCI cards, multiple internal hard drives, or a lot of RAM, the Core i5 iMac makes a strong case for the being the go-to system for most Mac professionals.

— JAMES GALBRAITH

Call of Duty 4	iPhoto '09	Photoshop CS4	Compressor 3.0.4	Handbrake 0.9.3	Cinebench R10	Mathematica Mark 7 Parallels 5	WorldBench 6	Aperture 2.1.4
FRAME RATE	IMPORT 150 JPEGS	SUITE	ENCODE	RIP DVD CHAPTER	MULTIPLE CPU TEST	SCORE	MULTITASK TEST WINDOWS	IMPORT
86.9	0:26	0:39	5:44	1:22	1:12	9.64	6:07	1:50
87.1	0:22	0:39	5:40	1:16	0:58	11.65	4:28	1:41
69.1	0:32	0:41	7:41	2:20	2:15	4.42	4:47	2:32
66.2	0:32	0:42	8:16	2:23	2:15	4.28	4:45	2:34
19.2	0:36	0:47	9:03	2:24	2:33	4.22	4:57	3:08
49.3	0:27	0:38	6:17	1:15	1:00	11.13	4:27	1:36
50.4	0:28	0:42	6:33	1:10	0:45	19.53	5:00	1:45

We ran a Timedemo at 1024-by-768 with 4X anti-aliasing on in *Call of Duty 4*. We imported 150 JPEGs into iPhoto '09. The Photoshop Suite test is a set of 14 scripted tasks using a 50MB file. Photoshop's memory was set to 70 percent and History was set to Minimum. We used Compressor to encode a .mov file to the application's H.264 for video podcast setting. In HandBrake we ripped a DVD chapter to the hard drive. We recorded how long it took to render a scene with multiprocessors in Cinebench. We ran the Evaluate Notebook test in MathematicaMark 7. We ran the WorldBench 6 multitasking test on a Parallels 5 VM running Windows 7 Professional. We timed the import and thumbnail/preview creation time for 150 photos in Aperture. — Macworld Lab testing by James Galbraith, Chris Holt, Helen Williamson, and Roman Loyola.

Mac mini (Late 2009)

Two Mac mini updates in a year? Forgotten Mac, indeed.

A year ago, when I reviewed the previous Mac mini models – officially called the Mac mini (Early 2009) – Apple's smallest desktop computer had just received a long-overdue refresh: it had been 19 months since the company had touched the Mac mini line. But that update was the most significant in the line's history; while the two models retained the same price tags as their 2007 predecessors, nearly every aspect of each was upgraded.

The latest Mac mini revisions – which Apple labels Mac mini (Late 2009) this time around – offer comparatively minor improvements at the same price points. Both models remain 16.5cm square and 5cm thick, weighing 1.3kg each. Each continues to offer a gigabit Ethernet port, FireWire 800, five USB 2.0 ports, digital/analogue (auto-sensing) audio input and output mini-jacks, a security lock slot, and an infrared receiver for the optional Apple Remote (\$25). You also still get 802.11a/b/g/n wireless, Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR, and an 8X dual-layer SuperDrive.

Like the early-2009 models, the latest minis include an Nvidia GeForce 9400M video processor; however, this time around the 9400M takes advantage of up to 256MB of main memory on both models.

The 9400M again drives two video ports: a mini-DVI port that uses an included adapter to connect to standard DVI displays, and a Mini DisplayPort connector identical to those found on the current iMacs and MacBooks. The Mini DisplayPort jack works directly with Mini DisplayPort-equipped displays (such as Apple's 24in LED Cinema Display, or even the latest iMac models, which can be used as a display); you can also connect a standard DVI display using Apple's Mini DisplayPort to DVI Adapter.

As with the early-2009 minis, you can connect two displays simultaneously and use either extended- or

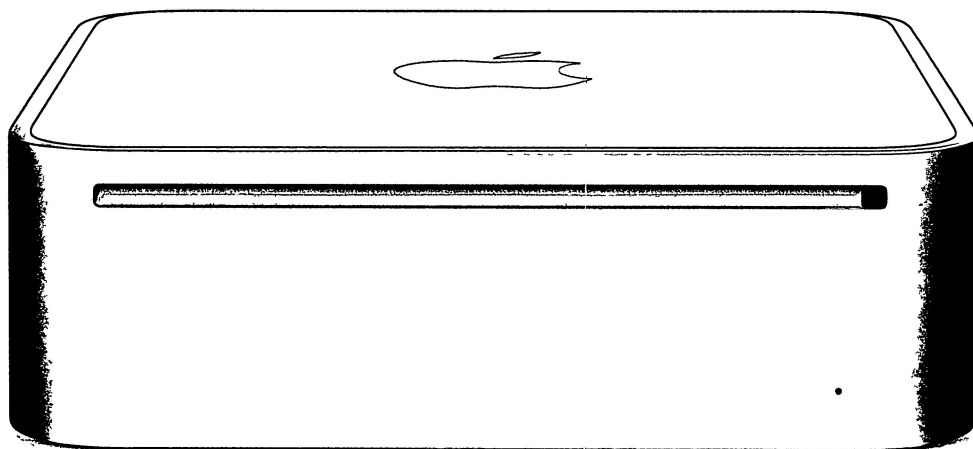
mirrored-desktop mode. Alternately, you can use Apple's Mini DisplayPort to Dual-Link DVI Adapter to connect a 30in Cinema HD Display. Both video outputs include High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection (HDCP).

Apple continues to boast of the mini's green credentials, this time publishing an environmental report that covers everything from the mini's energy and material efficiency to packaging and recycling-friendly construction. However, the current minis use "less than 14W of power when idle", up slightly from "less than 13W" for the previous models.

Modest improvements. Where the latest models differ from their predecessors are in processor speed, memory, and hard-drive capacity. The \$849 model now ships with a 2.26GHz Core 2 Duo processor, 2GB of 1066MHz DDR SDRAM, and a 160GB SATA hard drive (up from 2.0GHz, 1GB, and 120GB, respectively). The \$1099 model now sports a 2.53GHz processor, 4GB of RAM, and a 320GB hard drive. All hard drives remain 5400rpm, 2.5in SATA drives; while these reduce energy use and help keep the mini mini, they also perform poorly compared to larger desktop drives.

The system bus on both models remains at 1066MHz, with the CPU hosting a 3MB Level-2 cache. The \$849 model can be upgraded, when buying from Apple, to a 2.53GHz processor, and the \$1099 model can be upgraded to 2.66GHz; each upgrade costs \$210.

Both Mac mini models also now support Apple's USB-powered MacBook Air SuperDrive, even though the mini has its own built-in SuperDrive. This change results from the new Mac mini models using most of the same internal circuitry as the Mac mini with Snow Leopard Server, which



Mac Mini

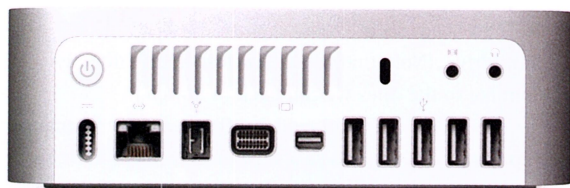
Apple, www.apple.com.au

Pros Tiny size; impressive set of features; all the dramatic improvements of the Early 2009 model plus better performance.

Cons Slow hard drive; difficult to upgrade.

RRP \$849 (2.26GHz, 160GB);
\$1099 (2.53GHz, 320GB)





The latest models improve modestly on their predecessors with faster processors, more RAM and – on the lower-end model – more hard-drive.”

omits an internal SuperDrive in favour of a second hard drive.

Rounding out the list of improvements, the newest Mac minis also ship, as you would expect, with Snow Leopard. They continue to include iLife 09.

Still upgradeable. Apple has confirmed that you can still upgrade your mini without voiding the warranty. However, as in the past, upgraded components – third-party RAM and hard drives – are not covered by the mini’s warranty, and if you break anything in the process of upgrading, such damage is not covered.

That said, given that the \$849 model now ships with 2GB of memory – a good starting point for any Mac running OS X – and the \$1099 model ships with 4GB, there’s not nearly as much need to perform such surgery as there was previously. And while you might be tempted to upgrade the hard drive to a larger one – or to a faster model – an external FireWire 800 drive will offer more storage capacity and better performance than any upgraded internal drive.

Apple has even made it less appealing to max out the mini’s RAM on your own: the \$1099 model is already flush with 4GB, and upgrading the \$849 model to 4GB when you order will set you back only another \$140 – a reasonable price considering current prices on a 4GB RAM kit for the mini. And don’t forget that ordering the upgrade from Apple is easier and means the RAM is covered under Apple’s warranty. (Granted, with an aftermarket upgrade, you’ll end up with the original 2GB of RAM to use elsewhere, but with all current Macs shipping with a minimum of 2GB of RAM, those ‘leftover’ chips won’t do you much good unless you’ve got some other compatible hardware sitting around.)

However, if you’re planning on using the Mac mini with RAM-hungry apps, there’s a new wrinkle to consider: As with the previous line, both new minis officially support 4GB of memory. However, according to macminicolo.net,

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MM 60 iPhone

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MM 60 Nokia

Dynamic stereo sound - open headset, for great music reproduction. Foldable design, ideal for travel. Convenient - in-line microphone has call answer/hang-up button - optimised for Nokia.



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123Macmini.com, and OWC, both the previous and new Mac mini lines can actually handle up to 8GB of RAM when running the latest firmware and Snow Leopard. (Apple says such configurations are officially unsupported.)

Of course, you'll have to shell out nearly \$600 for such an upgrade, but it's nice to know such an upgrade is an option if the need ever arises – or as RAM inevitably gets cheaper.

Performance. The Mac mini line has always been about size and value, rather than performance. The early-2009 models were prime examples: while they were the first minis that were truly capable of handling the iLife suite and playing processor- and graphics-intensive games such as *Call of Duty 4*, they performed more like MacBooks than Mac Pros – or even than iMacs. So even though the late-2009 minis are all about increasing performance, you shouldn't expect to be wowed by the newest models' power.

To test these improvements, we ran our latest suite of benchmarks on both new models, as well as on the new \$849 model upgraded to 4GB of RAM; the early-2009 model; and the most-recent pre-2009 Mac mini, the 1.83GHz 2007 model, upgraded to 2GB of RAM (our benchmarks require 2GB).

We didn't test the cheaper early-2009 mini this time around, as once you upgrade it to 2GB of RAM, the only difference between it and the more expensive model is

the hard drive. (Note that these new tests aren't directly comparable to the ones we ran back in March.)

The new stock Mac mini models offer decent performance increases over the old models. While improvement margins varied depending on the test, comparing the overall time it took to complete our 17 time-based tests, the new cheaper (2.26GHz) model took about 7 percent less time than the older expensive (2.0GHz) model, and the new expensive (2.53GHz) mini took 16 percent less time than its predecessor.

Where didn't the new Mac minis improve significantly on their immediate predecessors? The early-2009 Mac mini we tested actually beat the new 2.26GHz model – and tied the new 2.53GHz mini – in our Finder Duplicate test, which involves duplicating a 1GB folder of files. The older model also slightly outperformed the new 2.26GHz mini in our Movie Import, Finder Unzip Archive, and iPhoto Import tests.

This is likely explained by a slightly faster hard drive in the older top model, as these tests are largely dependent on hard-drive speed. The new models also showed no improvement, compared to the old model with 2GB of RAM, in our graphics-card-dependent *Call of Duty* test.

For those with older models considering an upgrade, a more useful point of reference is the 1.83GHz 2007 Mac mini. Compared to this, the late-2007 minis offer major

NEW MAC MINIS (LATE 2009)

	Adobe Photoshop CS4	Cinebench	Mathematica Mark 7	Compressor 3.0.4	Aperture 2.1.4	iMovie '09	iMovie '09	iTunes 9	
	SUITE	RENDER	TEST	MPEG ENCODE	IMPORT	IMPORT ARCHIVE	EXPORT	MP3 ENCODE	
Mac mini 2.53GHz 4GB	0:50	2:44	3.57	10:14	3:28	1:49	2:08	1:34	
Mac mini 2.26GHz 2GB	0:55	3:05	3.2	10:55	3:55	2:08	2:17	1:43	
Mac mini 2.26GHz 4GB	0:53	3:03	3.33	10:48	3:26	1:59	2:11	1:44	
Mac mini 2.0GHz 2GB (Early 2009)	0:59	3:29	2.98	12:01	4:08	2:07	2:33	1:53	
Mac mini 1.83GHz 2GB (Mid 2007)	1:12	4:01	2.49	15:22	6:26	5:06	3:14	2:14	

Best results in bold. For *Call of Duty 4* and MathematicaMark 7, higher scores are better. All other tests are timed results where lower times are better. Reference systems in italics. *Call of Duty* score is in frames per second. MathematicaMark is a performance score. All others are in minutes:seconds. All systems were tested with 10.6.1. RAM as noted. The Photoshop Suite test is a set of 14 scripted tasks using a 50MB file. Photoshop's memory was set to 70 percent and History was set to Minimum. We recorded how long it took to render a scene with multiprocessors in Cinebench.

performance boosts: The updated \$849 model finished our benchmark tests in 29 percent less time, with the new \$1099 mini beating that older model by 36 percent.

Comparing the two new models directly, the top mini was 10 percent faster than the stock cheaper mini in total time to complete our tests, although it was only 7.4 percent faster once we upgraded the cheaper model to 4GB of RAM.

Finally, comparing the new Mac minis to other current 'consumer' Macs provides more perspective on performance. The new white Unibody MacBook was slightly faster than the \$849 mini at completing our battery of tests, while the least-expensive new iMac was 28 percent faster than the new \$849 mini and 20 percent faster than the \$1099 model.

Which to get? In my review of the early-2009 models, I noted that when deciding between the two models, the choice was easy: Despite the cheaper Mac mini's paltry 1GB of RAM and small hard drive, the premium you paid for the higher-end model got you only a RAM upgrade and a larger – but still slow – hard drive. You could get much more value for your money by buying the lower-end model with Apple's RAM upgrade, and using the money you had left over to get a huge, fast, FireWire 800 drive.

With the new Mac mini models, the choice is a bit more difficult. Unlike its predecessor, the new \$849 model no longer requires a RAM upgrade out of the box, and it also

gains a faster processor and a bit more hard-drive space. But this time around the higher-end model's \$250 premium gets you a larger hard drive, 4GB of RAM, and an even faster processor – upgrades that, if added to the \$849 model when purchasing from Apple, would cost \$350 in total.

What this means is that if you want the very best performance in a Mac mini, you'll want to go with the \$1099 model with its faster processor and maxed-out RAM.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. The latest models improve modestly on their predecessors with faster processors, more RAM and – on the lower-end model – more hard-drive. The results are Mac minis that address a few of my biggest criticisms of the early-2009 models. (Sadly, slow hard drives remain.)

The Mac mini continues to be a great option for those new to the Mac who already have a display, keyboard, and mouse. As for current Mac owners, if you bought a Mac mini earlier this year, you're unlikely to want to upgrade.

But if you've got an older Mac and you're looking to upgrade, the latest minis are appealing. They give you all the impressive updates of the models released earlier this year along with better performance.

— DAN FRAKES

	Call of Duty 4	Finder	Finder	Finder	Parallels	Handbrake	iPhoto '09	Pages '09	Complete 17 Tests
	FRAME RATE	DUPLICATE 1GB FOLDER	ZIP ARCHIVE	UNZIP ARCHIVE	WORLDBENCH 6 MULTI-TASK TEST	RIP DVD CHAPTER	IMPORT	OPEN WORD DOCUMENT	ALL TIMED TESTS
	18.3	0:39	3:56	1:01	6:31	2:43	0:47	1:54	39:28
	18.3	0:45	4:34	1:28	7:14	2:49	1:05	2:28	43:58
	18.4	0:45	4:28	1:32	7:18	2:53	0:57	2:05	42:36
	18.4	0:39	4:50	1:19	8:12	3:08	1:03	2:36	47:10
	n/a	1:22	6:10	3:32	8:10	3:18	1:37	3:03	61:36

We used Compressor to encode a .mov file to the application's H.264 for video podcast setting. We timed the import and thumbnail/preview creation time for 150 photos in Aperture. In iMovie, we imported a camera archive and exported it to iTunes with the Mobile Devices setting. We converted 90 minutes of AAC audio files to MP3 using iTunes' High Quality setting. We duplicated a 1GB folder, created a Zip archive in the Finder from the two 1GB files and then Unzipped it. We ran WorldBench 6 multitasking test on a Parallels VM. We imported 150 JPEGs into iPhoto. We ripped a DVD chapter to the hard drive and opened a 500-page Word document in Pages '09. — Macworld Lab testing by James Galbraith, Chris Holt and Roman Loyola.

Step up for a bargain

The latest version of Adobe's consumer-grade Photoshop image editor is a solid upgrade to a good program, writes RICK LePAGE

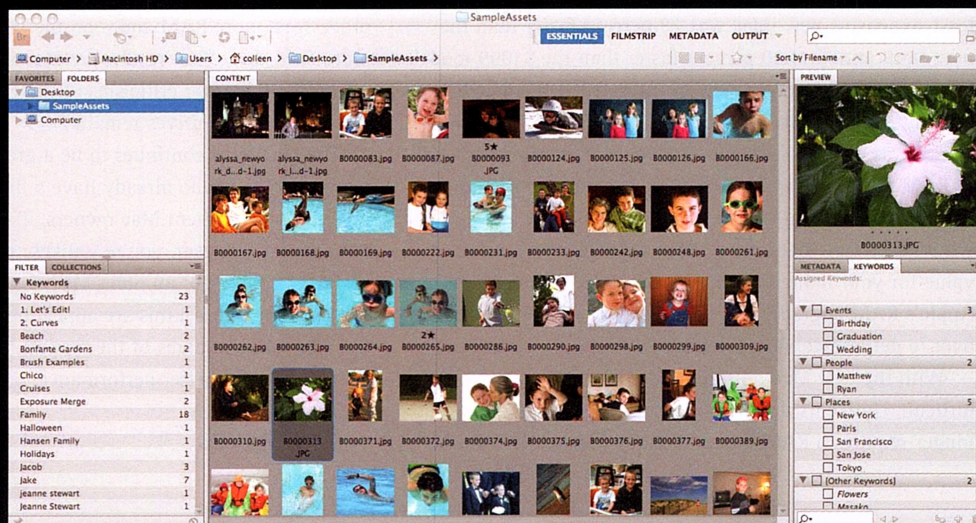
Adobe Photoshop Elements is one of the best bargains in the photo-editing market: for a fraction of the cost of Photoshop, you get a full complement of editing tools, guided tutorials for improving your photos, as well as lots of other features aimed at helping you create cards, collages, photo montages and more.

With version 8, Adobe hasn't made radical changes: it's added a few new tools, beefed up the Guided Edit and Quick Edit modes, and adopted some of the look of Photoshop CS4. Overall, it's a solid – if light – upgrade to an already good product.

Organisation. The Mac and Windows versions of Photoshop Elements 8 are identical. The bundled software, however, is not. Whereas the Windows version comes with Organizer, a user-friendly program for managing and tagging images, the Mac version includes Adobe Bridge CS4, a more complex cataloguing tool that works with all kinds of files, not just photos.

Although not as intuitive as the Organizer for some tasks (adding keyword tags is a bit more cumbersome, for example), Bridge provides solid integration with Elements, includes a very good full-screen review mode, and works satisfactorily as a photo browser.

There are a few Organizer features that Bridge lacks, most notably online backup of photos to Adobe's Photoshop.com service, and the ability to upload photos from the Organizer to photo-sharing sites like Flickr, Photoshop.com, and SmugMug. Mac users can still get a free Photoshop.com account with 2GB of storage, but photos must be



With version 8, Adobe hasn't made radical changes: it's added a few new tools, beefed up the Guided Edit and Quick Edit modes, and adopted some of the look of Photoshop CS4."

uploaded via a web browser, and there are no provisions for storing backups of your photos.

If you use iPhoto as your primary photo catalogue, you can easily set it up so that you edit in Elements 8.

However, if you create a complex file from your original – or you want to edit RAW files within Elements – and thus have to save it in a different format, you'll need to take the extra step of importing the updated version manually into iPhoto. It's iPhoto's database and folder structure that gets in the way here.

Elements 8 does make one nice improvement to the process of

exchanging files with iPhoto: the Open dialogue box now lets you directly open photos from your iPhoto or Aperture library (version 6 let you see the photos, but not open them).

Editing. Elements 8 looks different largely because Adobe has updated the program to use Photoshop CS4's panel interface (including the use of tabbed documents).

I found that the new look was a big improvement over Elements 6, but the changes are largely cosmetic; you'll find that things mostly work as they did before.

Of the major new features, the Smart Brush and Recompose tools

are the most successful in their implementation. Making selections in Photoshop Elements gets easier with each version, and the Smart Brush tool pushes this even further. It lets you create quick selections and then add versatile adjustment-layer effects, such as bluer skies, black-and-white effects, whiter teeth and other portrait enhancements.

For many users, making selections and masks can be overwhelming (and time-consuming); the Smart Brush tool helps simplify these tasks and lets you immediately see results without going through multiple steps. It's a winning combination.

Likewise, the Recompose tool, which lets you apply a 'smart' crop, is a great tool for eliminating (or at least minimising) unwanted objects while keeping important elements free from distortion. It literally brings the subjects in your photo closer together.

Like many tools with seemingly magical abilities, it doesn't work perfectly on every image, but it's one of the best new features in Elements.

The new Photomerge Exposure feature is less successful. It takes a group of over- and under-exposed photos and attempts to create a blended image with a balanced exposure. However, I had a hard time finding a set of photos that created a realistic-looking final photo.

The reality is, for Photomerge Exposure to work effectively, you'll

Adobe Photoshop Elements 8

Adobe, www.adobe.com.au

Pros New Recompose tool adds intelligent cropping; Smart Brush is a nice addition to selection tools; lots of minor productivity and interface enhancements.

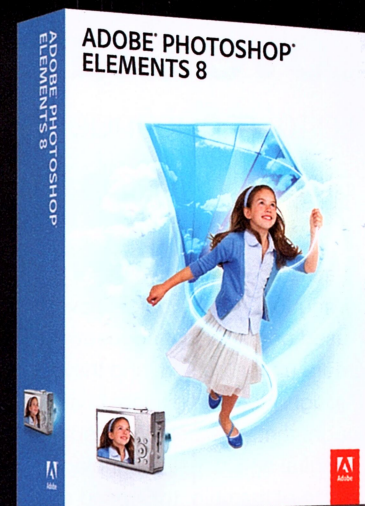
Cons Lack of Organiser means no direct photo sharing or synchronisation services; Photomerge Exposure feature not entirely successful; can only print centred images.

RRP \$175



need to carry a tripod and remember to take multiple pictures while keeping your subjects relatively still.

Little enhancements. Adobe has also added quite a few small features and improvements that make it a better application. For example, the new Surface Blur filter, another import from Photoshop, is a great tool for smoothing skin in portraits, thanks to the sophisticated way it preserves edge detail when applying a blur.



The Quick Edit mode has new selection and adjustment tools for whitening teeth, removing red eye and increasing sky saturation. They're things you can do on your own, but this simplifies the process for you.

Also in Quick Edit mode, there's a helpful new feature for previewing adjustments before you make them. To access it, click on the small grid icon to the left of each slider; as you move the cursor over each preview in the grid, the image on screen will change to preview the result.

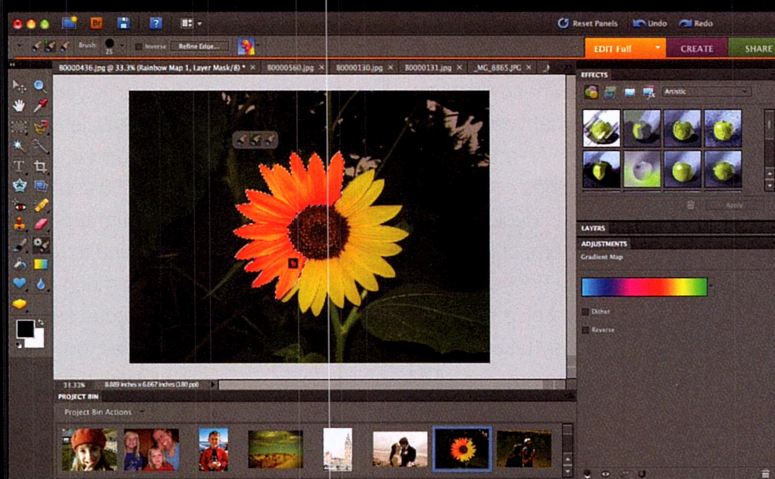
In an attempt to simplify the process of printing photos, Adobe did take one small thing away in Elements 8: you can no longer precisely place a photo on a printed page. Instead, the image is always centred. It's a little thing, but for people who want to save on paper, or for scrapbookers working with precise layouts, it is a pain. (Another downside is Elements 8 is Intel-only.)

Australian Macworld's buying advice.

If you measure solely by whiz-bang new features, Photoshop Elements 8 comes across as a minor upgrade. However, with the addition of few strong new tools and lots of small improvements, Elements remains a bargain for those people who want much of the power of Photoshop, but don't want to pay the high price of \$1415.

opposite page top. Bridge CS4, which is included with Elements 8, has some good tools for reviewing and rating your images.

right. The Smart Brush lets you create quick selections and then add versatile adjustment-layer effects.



Love that Leica

Digital rangefinder photography has entered a new era with the brilliant Leica M9. Words and photographs by JAY TOWN.

I have been taking photos for a living for over 25 years. I have used or tested just about every camera under the sun, and they all do roughly the same thing. I had thought that what sets them apart in the digital age is their technology: the size of the chip, the speed of autofocus, and the frame rate, for instance. But I have been playing with the new Leica M9, and it has changed the way I evaluate cameras.

Shooting with the M9 has been such a joy that it has reminded me why I got into photography in the first place. There is something about its lack of technology that brings homage to the phrase, "Less is more".

This camera is not an SLR, so



Leica M9

Adeal, www.adeal.com.au

Pros Built to perfection and made to last; razor-sharp lenses; extremely high quality.

Cons Price.

RRP Body, \$10,500; lens as tested, 35mm f2 Summicron, \$4850



Shooting with the M9 has been such a joy that it has reminded me why I got into photography in the first place."

rather than viewing the scene through the lens, you are seeing it through a rangefinder. Unlike an SLR, the whole scene looks sharp and you have to use a split image plane to manually focus. This gives the impression that you are a part of the scene rather than detached from it, and it somehow makes you feel closer to what you are capturing.

An added bonus is that you can see things coming into the frame, so you can decide whether to wait and include them, or fire before they get there.

For years I have been listening to Leica shooters telling me how they take better pictures with these cameras. I had always put their comments in the same category as taking pictures while wearing a beret and a cravat, but now I get it.

The lack of autofocus or blazingly fast frame rate, means you are forced to think more about what you are doing. You tend to compose your pictures better, and time things just right to get the frame with a single shot.

This may sound like a step backwards, but sometimes to go forwards you must first go back.

Okay, let's look at the Leica's drawbacks. There is only one; the \$15,350 you'll fork out for a M9 and a 35mm f2 Summicron lens (like I received to test). Some might say that for so much money it should have autofocus and all the other bells and whistles, but I disagree.

With the M9 comes a brand-new, full-frame 18-megapixel CCD chip. In keeping with the purists, Leica has not gone the way of almost all other

manufacturers by using a CMOS chip to record the image.

While CMOS chips have undoubtedly better lower-light characteristics and use a lot less power, resulting in superior battery life, they cannot compare with the dynamic range of the CCD sensor as long as the ISO is at the lower end of the scale. And let's face it, most Leica users won't be pushing their ISO settings to the limit.

The most important thing about any camera system is the glass that it looks through. Leica makes arguably the best lenses you can get. They are razor-sharp and incredibly fast. The 50mm Noctilux is f0.95, and the 21mm, 24mm, and 35mm come in an f1.4. Of course, most of us will settle for f2 or f2.5 versions, but it's nice to have the really fast options.

In your hands the camera feels surprisingly heavy for its size, a testament to the build quality. It looks and feels like a camera should.

It's not too obtrusive, in fact most people wouldn't even be aware that you are taking photos.

Technically, it has a 24 x 36mm CCD chip that has an ISO range from 80-2500. In the M9 there is a built-in infrared suppression filter (external on the M8), and on the back of the camera is a bright 2.5in LCD monitor. The body comes in black or steel grey.

Images are stored on an SD card that, in a quirky Leica sort of way, can only be accessed by removing the plate on the foot of the camera.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. This camera is an absolute pleasure to shoot with. The specs on paper cannot do justice to how this camera feels in your hands, and how it really does make you take better pictures. The very first thing I'm going to do when I win Tattsлото is to buy two M9 bodies and a handful of f1.4 lenses ... and then I'll seriously think about a beret! 📷

Jay Town is a photographer on Melbourne's Herald Sun.

HOW A BROWN PAPER BOX INSPIRED A NATION OF AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHERS.

EOS photo 5

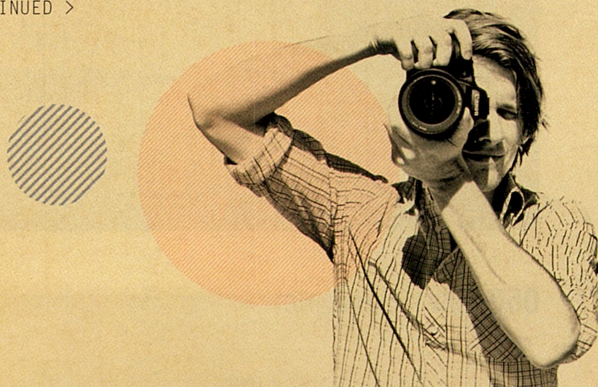
The idea was simple - fill a box with 5 basic items, and invite photographers to take creative photos of them. What began as the Canon 'EOS Photo5' box has since taken on a life of its own, growing into the most creative annual amateur photography competition in Australia and New Zealand.



Each year, thousands of amateur photographers receive their EOS Photo5 box filled with 5 items, which each represent a photographic brief.

This year the challenge was stepped up with 5 new briefs and creative techniques: Paint, hundreds & thousands, cardboard spectacles, bokeh hoods, and an open brief called 'practically black'. The response has been the biggest yet, with the 5 briefs inspiring close to 7000 images.

CONTINUED >



One for the seasoned shooter

Canon rangefinder is good, but overpriced.

Here's a camera that might not only be wasted in the hands of an inexperienced snapper but one that might well intimidate them.

Not too many cameras these days feature a rangefinder design coupled with an exposure compensation and an ISO dial. Very old school.

Canon has designed the G11 for use by those who know how useful an exposure compensation dial is and are likely to use it. People, perhaps, who would like to step up from a simple point-and-shoot camera or who might usually use a DSLR but would like to keep handy a more compact camera that doesn't limit their technical or creative skill.

But 'compact' is being a little generous. This camera won't slide into your short pocket, though it's a whole lot easier to tote than a DSLR.

The oddest thing about this camera is its minimum aperture of f8. Seriously,

f8. If I want to extend this camera to the long end of its 5x zoom range – a 35mm-equivalent range of 140mm, from a wide of 28mm – yet still have extensive depth of field, I'm out of luck.

Otherwise, the G11 is a pretty good performer. At its highest ISO setting of 3200, the G11 delivers images with agreeable noise levels, while at the other end of the range, images show a level of detail that surprises given the G11's CCD sensor is 10 megapixels.

The image quality performance has a lot to do with the G11 packing Canon's latest-generation image processor, the DIGIC 4. However, images are still a bit granular and I couldn't say this is the best I've seen from a Canon shooter.

The flash will light up an average room quite well, so for social occasions it'll get the job done. The G11 will accommodate Canon Speedlites, too.



Canon PowerShot G11

Canon, www.canon.com.au

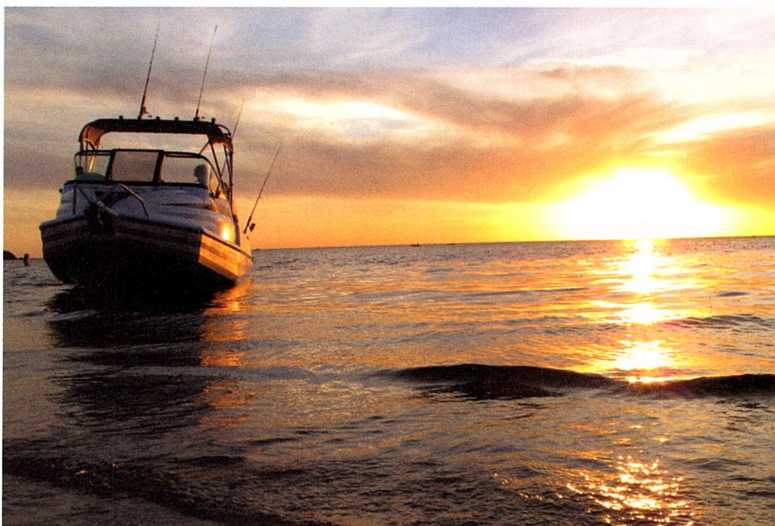
Pros Easy handling.

Cons f8 is minimum aperture.

RRP \$899.95



It packs a lot of features into a small package and feels like it can handle some rough and tumble.”



The reversible flip-out display makes for easy self-portraits. A timer mode with face detection (one of seven face detection modes) makes things even easier.

It features video capture, though it can't hold a candle to the AVCHD lite clips from the Lumix range. I wouldn't be buying this camera for its video, which is low resolution and noisy.

Australian Macworld's buying

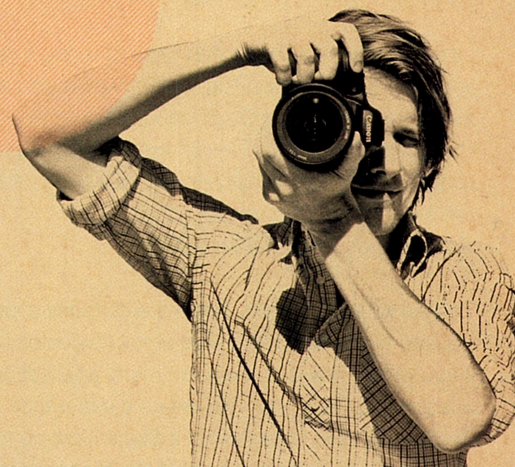
advice. At \$900, you have to realise the G11 has plenty of competition. If you settle on it, you'll do so because it packs a lot of features into a small package and feels like it can handle some rough and tumble. But having tried a few cameras in this class, I couldn't say the G11 would be my first choice. It would stand a better chance at the \$700 mark.

— CHRIS OATEN

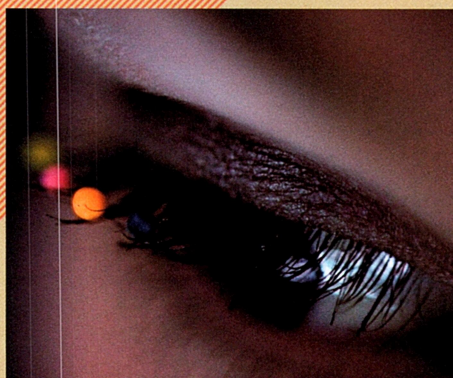
CONTINUED >

What has amazed both organisers and the photographic community is the level of creativity, with amateur photographers reaching a standard of images that many pros would be proud of. The project began as a way for Canon EOS to inspire photographers to push their creativity, but has become something far bigger, and goes to show how much creative talent is out there. Even when inspired by a simple brown paper box.

Visit the 'World of EOS' online to check out all the winners and finalists.



Erin Johnson
BRIEF#1 WINNER (Detail)
SPLAT//CAPTURING ACTION



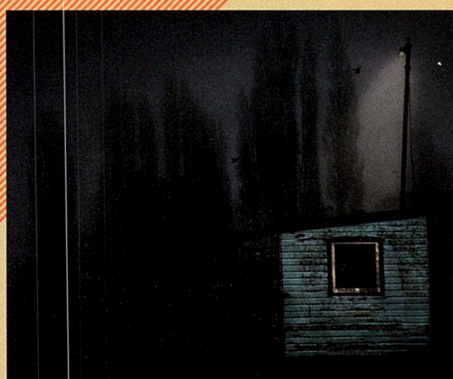
Samantha Hobson
BRIEF#2 WINNER (Detail)
HUNDREDS&THOUSANDS//CLOSE UP



Ross Calia
BRIEF#3 WINNER (Detail)
BOKEH//EXPERIMENTAL



Kylie Clark
BRIEF#4 WINNER (Detail)
SPECTACLES//PORTRAITURE



Shona Kebble
BRIEF#5 WINNER (Detail)
PRACTICALLY BLACK// LOW LIGHT



See more at canon.com.au/worldofeos



EOS

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Liquid Digital reader tip:

MAGNIFY THE DOCK

I just discovered that, when you're using the Dock without magnification turned on, when you are scrolling across the Dock you can hold down the Control and Shift buttons at the same time to turn magnification on temporarily (just while holding the keys), and vice versa.

Tom Belger, Parkerville, WA

Thanks for the tip, Tom. There are certainly a lot of ways to tweak the Dock. One of my favourites is, if you're beginning to keep too many application icons in the Dock, you can create a folder that will display your favourites in a Stack. Just go to your Applications folder and create Aliases of your frequently used programs (File > Make Alias, or right-click and choose Make Alias from the drop-down menu). Then create a folder (such as 'Dave's apps') and drag these Aliases into it. I just leave the folder in the Applications folder. Then just drag the folder into the right-hand side of the Dock – on the Trash side of the divider. From now on, clicking on it will reveal your apps in a Stack. – DB

Each month, Liquid Digital gives an aGent V5 webcam valued at \$119.95 to the *Australian Macworld* reader who submits (via email or the *Australian Macworld* website) the best and most useful tip. Preference will be given to undocumented tips but it is not an exclusive condition.

The sleek, sophisticated aGent V5 webcam from Liquid Digital is compatible with all Macs (OS 10.4+). The latest V5 model features full-HD 1920 x 1080 2-megapixel quality. With a five-layer German quality glass lens, an ultra-light, low-light sensor and an enhanced digital in-built mic, the V5 is a great choice for flexible, stylish web image and video applications. In the box is the polished-steel-cased aGent V5 webcam with MacBook and iMac attachment clips, USB adaptor, travel case and driver disc.

Email your tip with the subject header 'Help reader tip', including your full name, address and phone number, to macworldeditor@niche.com.au or make a contribution in the Help section of www.macworld.com.au/forums. All reader tips offered online or via mail/email become the sole property of Niche Media.



above. **Rescuing deleted data.** Data Rescue 3 (pictured) and FileSalvage can recover data from an erased hard drive.

RECOVERING AN ERASED HARD DRIVE

? I accidentally erased one of my drives using Disk Utility. Nothing has been written to the drive since it was erased. Do you have a suggestion for the best software for recovering the files?

William Eschenfeldt

If you didn't choose one of the secure erase options (which will overwrite your data with junk, making it much harder to recover the data), you have a decent shot at getting your data back. I can suggest a couple of tools that I've had success with.

The first is Prosoft Engineering's US\$99 (about \$108) Data Rescue 3 (www.prosofteng.com). Unlike some other utilities that demand that you install them on a drive before the bad thing happens, Data Rescue 3 works after the effluent has forcefully made contact with the rotating blades.

I've also had good results with SubRosaSoft.com's US\$89.95 (about \$98) FileSalvage (www.subrosasoft.com). Like Data Rescue 3, it recovers lost data after the damage has been done. Additionally, it lets you search

for specific file types. But before you invest your money in either program, download the free demos.

When you run each demo, it'll display all the files it can find. Choose the program that best identifies your data.

Note that, regardless of which tool you pick, recovering data can take hours. Data Rescue 3 is faster than the previous version, Data Rescue II, but it can still take a long time to retrieve your data. The same goes for FileSalvage.

If you have a high-capacity drive from which you're attempting to recover data, start the job before going to bed. By the time you wake up, your recovered files should be waiting for you.

— CHRISTOPHER BREEN

SOLUTIONS FOR SYNCHRONISING FOLDERS

? Is it possible to make a folder that acts as a shortcut to another folder yet contains copies of files from the original folder? I'd like to have such folders for backing up my school homework.

Ross Wehner

TIP: STOP HUNTING FOR WINDOWS

It's easy to waste time hunting for a particular window when you have a lot of programs open. Mac OS X 10.5 (Leopard) introduced a trick for solving this problem: you could activate Exposé (by pressing F9) and then press ⌘ -Tab to invoke the Application Switcher and select the program you wanted.

When you released ⌘ -Tab, the application you selected would move to the foreground in Exposé mode, revealing all its open windows. Alternatively, you could release just the ⌘ key, and cycle through all your programs (while in Exposé mode) by pressing the Tab key. This worked well, but OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard) has made the process much easier.

While the old method still works as before, you can now activate Exposé's Application Windows mode after pressing ⌘ -Tab. Don't try to do this with the F9 key on your keyboard, though, because that won't work.

Instead, keep the ⌘ key pressed, release Tab, and then press either the Up or the Down arrow. This will switch you into Exposé's Application Windows mode for the currently selected application in the ⌘ -Tab Application Switcher. At this point, you can release the ⌘ key, too, leaving no keys pressed.

From here, press Tab (or Shift-Tab) to cycle forward and backward among open applications (while remaining in Exposé's Application Windows mode). When you see the window you'd like to activate, press one of the arrow keys to select it (the selected window is then outlined in blue). To activate the application window you selected, just press Return to exit Exposé mode, and the window will come to the foreground.

— ROB GRIFFITHS

What you're after are synchronised folders. The idea being that when you drop something in one folder, the other folder is automatically updated with the contents of the first. One option is to create an Automator workflow that includes three actions:

- Get Specified Finder Items
- Get Folder Contents
- Copy Finder Items

The first refers to the folder you save your files to. The second tells the Mac what's in that folder. And the third copies the files to another folder.

Now choose File > Save As Plug-in and, in the sheet that appears, give your plug-in a name. Next, choose Folder Actions from the Plug-in For pop-up menu, attach the plug-in to the source folder, and then click Save. Now, when you put

anything into the Source folder, it will automatically be copied to the destination folder.

This is a reasonable way to do things if you're not worried about version control. If you want greater control over how things are copied, look at a synchronisation tool.

Try Econ Technologies' US\$40 (about \$44) ChronoSync (www.econtechnologies.com) or the Dropbox (www.dropbox.com) online storage service, which provides you with 2GB of storage for free.

When you install Dropbox on your Macs, each gets a Dropbox folder. When you move a file to your Dropbox folder on one computer, that file is synced to all the others, as well as with your storage area on the Dropbox Website.

— CHRISTOPHER BREEN

www.macworld.com.au

AGENT VS 

MacWorld ★★★★★
Good Gear Guide ★★★★★



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Purchase any aGent webcam at the new price of \$99.95 and enter the code **MACFEB** in the checkout to receive a **FREE ACCESSORIES GIFT PACK** (lens adaptor & tripod) value \$19.90*.



Lens adaptor



Tripod

*Len adaptor does not include photographic lens shown in photo. Lens stylists own. Valid for a limited time only for online orders only placed at www.liquidigital.com.au. Not valid with any other offer.

Find a stockist or buy online from

www.liquidigital.com.au

STM query of the month:

PROJECTOR HOOKUP

I need some help. I am helping my supervisor with a conference that he has organised. The computer hooked up to the projector is a PC running XP with Office 2007, so I thought it might be better for him to connect his Mac laptop to the projector directly (there is a VGA cord to use). If so, is there anything I need to do to connect it to the projector? Do I need to change the resolution or redetect displays? Ben, via Australian Macworld Forums

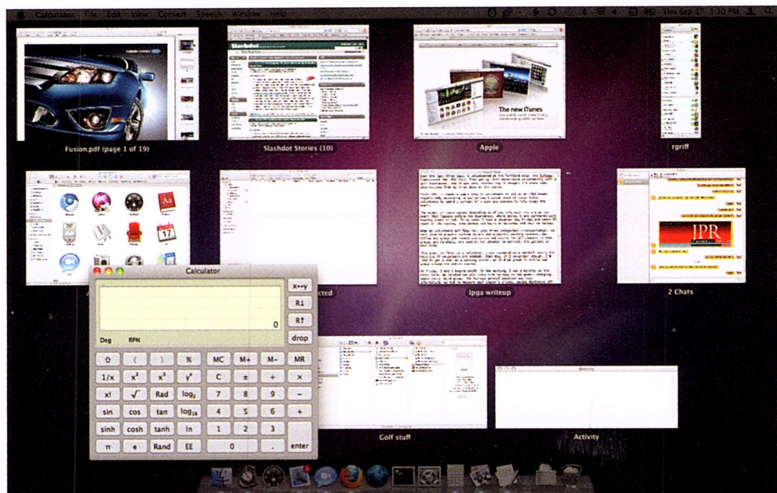
Forum guru skyhawkmatthew answers: There shouldn't be any issue with resolutions when you connect up the computer – if it has a higher resolution like the 15in MacBook Pro, it will default to mirroring the displays and will reduce the resolution of the MBP display (and maybe stretch it) such that it will look right on the projector but may look warped/big/soft on the laptop's screen.

If you take a look in Displays Preferences you can do things like turn off mirroring (so both displays will work at their native resolution) and you can use features like Presenter Tools (extended desktop is not available on iBooks, however).

You'll most likely (unless he has a PowerBook G3 or an original Titanium PowerBook G4) need an adapter to connect to VGA. These are as follows:

- iBook (clamshell): No can do
- Early TiBook, PowerBook G3: Will connect directly
- PowerBook G4 (15in and 17in), late model TiBook, MacBook Pro (all non-unibody): DVI to VGA Adapter
- PowerBook G4 (first-generation 12in), iBook (all white models): Mini-VGA to VGA Adapter
- PowerBook G4 12in (later models), MacBook (non-unibody plastic): Mini-DVI to VGA Adapter
- MacBook Air (original): Micro-DVI to VGA Adapter
- All Unibody and current MacBook Air: Mini DisplayPort to VGA Adapter.

Each month STM (02 8338 0222) gives a Remedy shoulder bag worth \$99.95 to the Australian Macworld reader who send in or posts to the forum the most intriguing query. STM's Remedy bag is a slim, light shoulder model that provides heavy-duty laptop protection. Send your query to macworldeditor@niche.com.au or post in the forums at www.macworld.com.au/forums. All queries and solutions are the sole property of Niche Media.



above. Safari reset. The Reset Safari window provides you with loads of reset options.

RESETTING SAFARI

? Whenever I conduct a Google search with Safari 4, I find that my search preferences aren't saved. I've chosen to view 100 results without SafeSearch, yet Google shows me the default 25 results with SafeSearch. I save my preferences yet again and still they won't stick. What do I do?

Anon, via the internet

You could try small measures first – wiping Safari's history or emptying its cache. If that does the job, great. If it doesn't, I'd bring the big gun to bear and choose Reset Safari from the Safari menu.

When you do this, a Reset Safari window appears, giving you a load of options – Clear History, Reset Top Sites, Remove All Webpage Preview Images, Empty The Cache, Clear The Downloads Window, Remove All Cookies, Remove All Website Icons, Remove Saved Names And Passwords, Remove Other AutoFill Form Text, and Close All Safari Windows.

You can select just the options you want – I'd consider unchecking Remove Saved Names And Passwords and Remove Other AutoFill Form Text, as losing this information can be inconvenient. With luck, Safari will then pay more attention to your desires.

— CHRISTOPHER BREEN

COMBINING PDF PAGES IN SNOW LEOPARD

? Ever since I upgraded to Snow Leopard, I've been unable to combine PDFs the way I could in Leopard with Preview. Any suggestions?

Jamie Stone, via email

Snow Leopard works a bit differently than Leopard did. If you drag thumbnails from one PDF window to another, then place them below the other document's thumbnails, and save – as you would in Leopard

TIP: VIEWING PDFS IN SAFARI

Snow Leopard's version of Safari is occasionally unable to open PDF files, producing an error that reads: "AdobePDFViewer cannot find a compatible Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader to view this PDF." The crux of the problem is the AdobePDFViewer plug-in, which is 32-bit software.

To fix the problem, go to Safari's Get Info window in the Finder and enable Open In 32-Bit Mode, which allows the plug-in to run. Or disable the plug-in by dragging it from the Internet Plug-Ins folder (/Library/Internet Plug-Ins). (If the plug-in is not there, look in the matching location in your Home directory's Library.) Quit and relaunch Safari. PDFs should now load using Safari's built-in PDF viewer, and Safari should be faster, as it's running in 64-bit mode.

— TED LANDAU

— you wind up with a document that contains just the pages you dragged into the sidebar.

The trick is to drag thumbnails on top of a thumbnail in the document you're dragging to. This combines the pages. If you then want to rearrange the pages, just drag them where you like — they'll stay within the combined document. Save your document and you're done.

If you've opened two PDF files at the same time and therefore find both documents in the sidebar, the technique is similar. Expand the document you want to move pages from by clicking the left-pointing arrow and drag the pages you want to copy on top of the icon of the other document in the sidebar. Reposition as you like.

When you've finished, choose Save All from the File menu.

— CHRISTOPHER BREEN

KEYBOARD NAVIGATION

? How can I use the keyboard with Stacks?

Anon, via the internet

In OS X 10.5, there were a couple of ways to navigate Stacks with your keyboard: In an activated stack, you could choose items by using the arrow keys or jump to them by typing the first few letters of its name.

Those two tricks work in 10.6 too, but you can also now drill down into folders within a stack.

To do so, you must be using Grid or List view.

Select the folder (using arrow keys or letters) and press Return (or ⌘-O or ⌘-Down Arrow) to drill down into that folder. To get back to the parent folder, press ⌘-Up Arrow.

You can use other modifier keys with folders in Grid or List view, too.

Press ⌘-Return to open the selected folder in the Finder and close the Stack. Press ⌘-Option-Return to open a folder in the background and leave the Stack open.

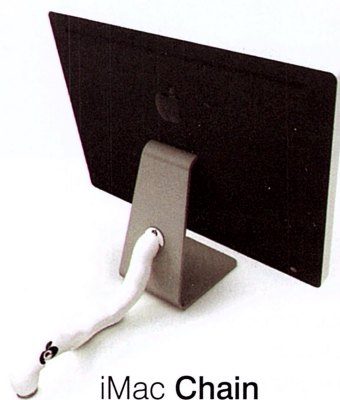
Snow Leopard has also added a new way to select windows in Exposé. After activating Exposé in All Windows mode (by pressing F9 or whatever key you've assigned it), you can select a window by starting to type its name.

Depending on the names of the open windows, that can take as few as one keystroke, though it will often take more to uniquely identify a window.

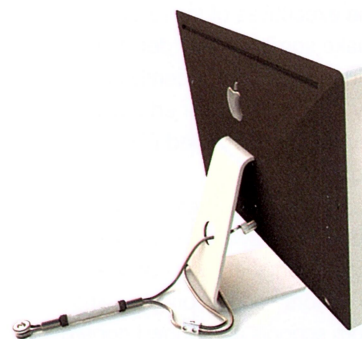
As you type, the system will highlight the currently selected windows with a blue halo. When the window you want to switch to is highlighted, press Return to bring it to the foreground.

— ROB GRIFFITHS

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EDUCATION
MARTIN LEVINS

Lifestyle, meet Workstyle

Imagine two fairly conservative schools: one girls and one boys, in a fairly conservative state. The boys use primarily Windows machines with a few 'rogue' Macs in Arts and Music; the girls mostly Macs.

Looking back almost two years, the executives of these two schools make some weighty decisions and Aidan McCarthy, recently employed by Microsoft in their education division, is appointed IT Director of both schools.

So far, there doesn't appear to be much to see here, but, before we move along, let's look deeper.

A fibre connection now joins both schools and Snow Leopard collaborative services have been rolled out, along with Mac laptops and iPod touches to seniors.

Over 1000 wikis have been set up – most by the users with little if any interaction with the IT staff.

Even the headmaster has his own wiki, and random groups associate in this space as freely as they do in the land of Facebook and MySpace.

McCarthy describes this as "the integration of lifestyle and workstyle". Users of the system appreciate the look and feel of Leopard, with few 'technical barricades' to stifle creativity.

This is the same IT Director who, until recently was working with the Microsoft development team on its Class server product.

Microsoft's Class Server wasn't successful and it's instructive to look at why.

It was a Learning Management System (LMS) like Moodle, Blackboard and a swag of others that provide a management functionality to the presentation of learning materials. They also manage tests

and assignments and subsequent collection of marks. In other words, they act as a management tool for one person – the teacher.

McCarthy labels this as an old paradigm – managing an environment that no one wants to be part of anymore. Despite Class Server being

Leopard services 'were a no-brainer' allowing teachers and students to create content, then distributing it using Podcast Producer."



focused on K-12, the model was old-school. He'd rather build communities of learners.

I asked him how he approached the changes that he was asked to make to the two schools and he answered: "With any situation like this, I'll research like crazy, then see what's best-practice."

His choice was Mac, with Snow Leopard Collaboration servers talking to Microsoft's Active Directory in the backend. Leopard services "were a no-brainer" allowing both teachers

and students to create content, then distributing it using the power of Apple's Podcast Producer. He has created a disruptive environment, challenging the traditional calls of, "If we're achieving fantastic results, then why change?" with an environment that students and parents want: engaging technologies that encourage learning.

You can see the results of their efforts on their collaborative site (see Hotlinks 1) and in iTunesU (see Hotlinks 2) along with offerings by the West Australian Department of Education & Training and Catholic Network Australia.

iTunesU is getting big, with these Australian K-12 schools launching in October 2009 and new sites worldwide being added almost weekly, it seems.

However, if we look at the sites, particularly those from the US, we see a lot of 'lecture captures' where a single camera records the bushranger 'stand and deliver' approach – hardly consonant with McCarthy's "Lifestyle and Workstyle". We clearly have a way to go here in the global scheme of things.

This particular use is outside of Apple's control, but there are other areas, such as the current inability to drag and drop to Leopard wiki pages, although this was a feature of the original product when it appeared as the 'Teams' server at WWDC.

I personally don't believe Apple understands what it has here – the Balkanisation inherent in any large company often precludes the viewing of a big picture where synergies can be identified.

More on these synergies and their possibilities next month. ☞



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SMALL STORAGE

Portable flash memory is the workhorse of our modern lives, allowing us to store and transport large amounts of data with ease. ANTHONY CARUANA looks at the two most ubiquitous forms – SD cards and USB sticks – and finds not all are created equal.

The increasing complexity of hardware, the ubiquity of personal content creation tools – think of the way our phones are cameras that can make phone calls – and our desire to capture the minutiae of our lives mean that storage devices have had to shrink in size and increase in capacity.

While the number of different standards has increased to the point of ridiculousness – any market that needs a 27-in-1 card reader has clearly over-diversified – we've limited our Lab Test to two of the most common formats: Secure Digital and USB.

Secure Digital, or SD, was introduced as the heir apparent to Compact Flash. At about half the thickness and a quarter of the footprint of its predecessor, SD offered lots of capacity in a much smaller package.

This was important as the miniaturisation of mobile phones, PDAs and early smartphones meant that storage devices needed to get smaller.

The original SD specification was limited to just 4GB of storage. As capacities beyond this limit were needed, an updated standard, SDHC, came into play. It's worth noting that if you're planning to give an older device a boost with a large SD card you'll need to check that the device's slot is SDHC compliant.

Any market that needs a 27-in-1 card reader has clearly over-diversified."

It gets a little more complex as SDHC can technically store up to 2TB of data but the SDHC spec artificially limits this to 32GB. The full 2TB can be accommodated using the newer SDXC standard.

Different SD cards can read and write data at different rates. Naturally, they get faster as you pay more. For

older compact digital cameras and PDAs, cheaper cards are OK. For more recent devices and digital SLR cameras and camcorders, get the fastest cards you can afford.

Over the last year or so, Apple has given the SD specification its own tacit seal of approval by adding an SD slot to many of its notebook and desktop systems.

There have been lots of moves in the world of removable storage. After the shift from 5.25in floppy disks to 3.5in diskettes came Iomega with their 100MB Zip Disk "and it seemed that we'd finally found a portable storage device with 'enough' capacity – a massive 100MB! However, within a few short years USB memory sticks became the de facto standard for moving files between systems.

USB memory sticks come in all shapes and sizes. In most cases a stick's shape meant the adjacent ports on our MacBook Pro were covered. For Mac users, slimmer sticks are best as our USB ports are quite close together.



Outstanding



Very good



Good



Flawed



Unacceptable

USB

VERBATIM STORE 'N' GO (16GB)

Bang for buck – that ought to be Verbatim's motto when it comes to the Store 'n' Go USB Drive. Costing a tick under \$50 on the street, it may not be the sleekest or sexiest flash drive but it packed plenty of punch.

Using a MacBook Pro, we were able to copy 840MB of files to the Store 'n' Go in a shade under 44 seconds. The return trip took 24.5 seconds making this a very fast drive for the price.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. While the plastic casing feels a little cheap and the USB retractor isn't all that smooth, Verbatim's Store 'n' Go is cheap and fast.

Verbatim, www.verbatim.com.au

Pros Fast

Cons Chunky

RRP \$50



USB

SANDISK CRUZER (16GB)

The entry-level Cruiser's USB connector slides out easily and was ready to use in a second or so on our test system. Even though it was one of the smallest units we looked at it was still too wide to allow anything to connect in the adjacent USB port. Apple – are you listening?

Cruzer really fell short in performance. Our write test, copying 840MB of files to the drive, took a whopping three and half minutes. The return trip that took just 34 seconds.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. At the Sandisk Cruiser's price there's lots of competition. With the extremely slow write speed other options might be better value.

Sandisk, www.sandisk.com.au

Pros Light

Cons Slow

RRP \$58



USB

SANDISK EXTREME CONTOUR (16GB)

The Extreme Contour is Sandisk's current flagship flash drive. With a partly metal casing it has a very cool mechanism for exposing the USB connector.

At about 23mm wide there's no chance of getting anything plugged in next to it on a MacBook Pro. But performance was definitely the Contour's strong suit – it lead all-comers in this month's Lab Test with the write test, where we copied 840MB to the Contour taking just 40 seconds. The return trip was a zippy 27 seconds.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. Costing under \$100, delivering great performance and sporting the coolest USB connector, the Contour is definitely worth considering.

Sandisk, www.sandisk.com.au

Pros Super fast

Cons Big

RRP \$96



USB

LEXAR JUMPDRIVE LIGHTNING (4GB)

Lexar produces some excellent products, such as this JumpDrive Lightning. It took our Mac just a second before the drive was ready to use.

Performance was excellent. While it took about 46 seconds to write our 840MB file package to the Lightning, reading it back took a Lab Test-leading 23 seconds.

It's unfortunate that Lexar only offers the Lightning at a limit of 8GB – a 16GB version would be very handy.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. While the Lexar JumpDrive Lightning isn't the cheapest flash drive around, those happy to pay for performance will find this a worthy addition to their kit.

Lexar, www.lexar.com/au/

Pros Solid, fast

Cons Large

RRP \$84



USB**LEXAR TWISTTURN (16GB)**

The JumpDrive TwistTurn is one of Lexar's more affordable USB flash drives. While it's not the fastest we tested, it offers reasonable value.

Our write test, moving 840MB of files to the drive, took almost 90 seconds – the second slowest result in this Lab Test. The read test took half as much time, giving it the slowest result by quite some margin. That makes this drive handy for moving files around but not for intense activities.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. If you're after a cheap and cheerful drive with plenty of space at an affordable price, then the TwistTurn will probably fit the bill.

Lexar, www.lexar.com/au/

Pros Small, light

Cons Performance

RRP \$50

**SDHC****SANDISK STANDARD SDHC (4GB)**

Sandisk's entry-level SD Card may not offer the blinding performance of its Extreme II cousin, but suits those who want capacity and can compromise on speed.

For those with Mac without an SD slot, this card comes with Sandisk's MicroMate SD card reader. Copying 840MB of files took almost two and half minutes. The return trip took about 80 seconds, with little difference between the MicroMate Reader and our MacBook Pro's internal reader.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. This card will work nicely with compact cameras, but if you've got a DSLR the performance is likely to limit your ability to snap quickly.

Sandisk, www.sandisk.com.au

Pros Value

Cons Performance

RRP \$23

**SDHC****SANDISK EXTREME III (16GB)**

Now that we're seeing 10-megapixel snappers at the entry level we need cards with plenty of capacity and speed. That's where Sandisk's Extreme III comes to the fore.

Plugged into our MacBook Pro's SD slot it delivered excellent performance, taking just under 44 seconds to copy 840MB to the card and 32 seconds to copy from the card. In our digital SLR we didn't notice any lag as we were able to take up to five 10MP shots per second.

As a bonus, Sandisk includes a free download for the RescuePro recovery software.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. Excellent performance for those needing both capacity and speed.

Sandisk, www.sandisk.com.au

Pros Fast

Cons Expensive

RRP \$209

**MICRO SD****VERBATIM PRO SERIES (4GB)**

When it became apparent that the postage stamp-sized SD was too large for some devices, microSD came along to fill that void. Verbatim's microSD card comes with an SD adaptor, making a very flexible beast.

Performance was middling. It took just under two minutes to copy 840MB to the card and about 80 seconds to copy the same files from the card. But this card is likely to be used in a mobile phone, where it would perform adequately.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. Verbatim's microSD cards come in 2GB, 4GB and 8GB capacities. The 4GB card we tested might not have been the fastest card we looked at but it will do the job nicely in a mobile phone.

Verbatim, www.verbatim.com.au

Pros Includes adaptor

Cons Mediocre performance

RRP \$24



SDHC VERBATIM PRO HD VIDEO (16GB)

This card is specifically pitched at camcorder users shooting hi-def video, so we expected better than the two minutes it took to copy 840MB of files to the card. Although video recording is more a steady stream than our burst test we'd have preferred a sub-one-minute result. Copying files from the card took half as much time as writing to it.

Capacities range from 4GB to 32GB, and also state expected recording times. The 16GB card we tested claimed it could hold up six hours of HD footage.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. While performance wasn't great, Verbatim's cards do offer excellent value.

Verbatim, www.verbatim.com.au

Pros Good value

Cons Performance

RRP \$80



SDHC LEXAR PLATINUM II 60X (8GB)

With Lexar's Platinum II card you're getting excellent performance at an incredibly low price. While this wasn't quite the fastest card in the round-up it wasn't far off.

Copying 840MB of files to the card took a mere 50 seconds – just seven seconds slower than the Sandisk Extreme III. Copying the same payload from the card took 42 seconds. However, Lexar's card costs just \$45 whereas the same capacity Sandisk comes in at over \$100.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. With great performance at an affordable price it's hard to fault this card. Capacities range from 4GB to 16GB.

Lexar, www.lexar.com/au/

Pros Performance

Cons None

RRP \$45



SDHC LEXAR PROFESSIONAL 133X (8GB)

Lexar rates the Professional 133x SDHC as its fastest card and, while it's no slouch, we didn't find it significantly faster than the much cheaper Platinum II.

Our 840MB file copies to and from the Professional 133x revealed almost identical results to the Platinum. The results were so close that we retested just to be sure we hadn't put the same card in twice. Lexar rates this card at about twice as fast as the Platinum II and charges accordingly. However, our testing couldn't find a significant performance difference.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. At \$129 there's nothing wrong with this card. However, we'd find it hard to recommend over the Platinum II.

Lexar, www.lexar.com/au/

Pros Performance

Cons Cost

RRP \$129



DO YOU NEED A READER?

Now that newer Macs include an SD card reader is there a performance benefit in using an external reader?

Our testing with USB 2.0 readers suggests that there's no significant performance benefit in using an external reader – high-end readers didn't make much difference. However, it's worth noting that if you have a camera that uses Compact Flash (CF) cards, and plenty still do in professional ranks, then an external reader is a must.

That said, it's worth noting that the SD reader built into the latest Macs uses an internal USB interface. If you can get your hands on a FireWire reader then you may find some benefit but that will depend on whether you're transferring lots of smaller files, like photos or fewer, large files such as from a video camera. FireWire is almost always faster at moving larger files.



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OmniOutliner Professional 3.9.1

The Omni Group,
www.omnigroup.com

Pros Outstanding feature set;
auto-save; docx support

Cons Dated documentation

RRP US\$69.95 (about \$76)
16.8MB download



Awesome outlining

The last time we looked at OmniOutliner Pro was four years ago and the version was 3.0.2. And though a long time has passed, the current version of OmniOutliner Pro is only 3.9. Yet in that time The Omni Group has been steadily keeping OmniOutliner current, and the culmination is a finely-tuned, mature product that builds on a solid foundation.

If your outlining experience begins and ends with Microsoft Word, the variety of options offered by OmniOutliner may be a bit bewildering at first. It is as much an information management and presentation tool as an outlining program.

Certainly, the classic indented multi-level outline is the foundational pattern on which outline documents are based, but it's where OmniOutliner goes from there that makes it so compelling.

Among the new enhancements are auto-save which can backup currently open documents as frequently as every minute. It has also picked up the ability to export to Microsoft Word 2008's docx format.

The only disappointment about OmniOutliner Pro was the dated documentation. Learning about new features and limitations required hunting down the release notes page on Omni Group's website.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. OmniOutliner Professional 3.9.1 is still the best outlining and list management tool on the market. Omni Group has wisely avoided gratuitous feature creep, focusing instead on keeping current with the Mac OS and judiciously enhancing a solid feature set.

— STUART GRIPMAN

Light 'er up

Monitor reduces eye strain.

Philips is probably even more focused on the lighting industry than the consumer electronics and healthcare ones, so it's no surprise the Dutch company is incorporating lighting in many of its products.

I toured the company's HQ in Eindhoven a couple of years back, and have since been a convert to the benefits of good lighting to create moods and reduce eyestrain.

When Philips first introduced its Ambilight TVs – which throw a light, either plain or synched to the onscreen picture, behind the unit – they were seen as a gimmick. But when you have used the products with the lights on, something definitely seems to be missing when you switch them off. (They're sadly not available in Australia any more.)

The LightFrame 220X1 is an LCD computer monitor that also uses Philips lighting. But instead of throwing light behind it, the frame lights up.

When turned off, it looks just like an ordinary white plastic frame, but when turned on, it lights up with a blue glow. There are three levels of brightness, from just-there to in-your-face.

Two of us at AMW have tried out the 220X1: I like to use the glow on its lowest setting, and find that it really does lessen the screen glare; my colleague, on the other hand, doesn't like the light at all and turns it off.

Looking beyond the light-frame, the 220X1 is a 22in model with a resolution of 1680 x 1050 pixels. Dynamic contrast is rated at 12,000:1.

On the right side of the monitor are a series of control buttons, including one for SmartImage. Similar to LCD TV technologies, this adjusts the contrast, colour saturation and sharpness of the screen according to a scenario you choose.

Australian Macworld's buying

advice. The 220X1's selling point is its LightFrame, which will appeal to many people, including myself. The specifications are good as well. The problem, though, is that the screen image never looks really sharp and lacks depth. Don't get me wrong, it's very usable, but it just doesn't stack up against many others in this class.

— DAVE BULLARD



Philips LightFrame 220X1

Adeo, www.adeo.com.au

Pros LightFrame looks good, and seems to work

Cons Screen image lacks sharpness and depth

RRP \$399



Designed for durability

Starck-designed drive combines toughness and style.

LaCie's Starck Mobile Hard Drive is a stylish, Mac-friendly USB drive that features a sturdy aluminium exterior, unconventionally slick curves, and a wealth of very enticing features.

Over the years, LaCie has worked with a number of high-profile designers to make drives that range from simple, modern F.A. Porsche designs to the more whimsical designs of Ora Ito. This continues that trend.

This new drive combines the hearty security of an aluminium armour case with the curved style of something Iomega might produce.

When I first connected the Starck Mobile Hard Drive, the LaCie Setup

drive in your backpack rather than your back pocket.

While the USB connectivity ensures that nearly everyone can use the Starck drive, USB has its limitations. It is generally slower than FireWire or eSATA connections on a Mac, so speed will not be the focus here. Older laptops may have difficulty producing enough power to spin the mechanism of the Starck Mobile.

Thankfully, an included-power sharing cable enables the unit to draw power from an additional USB port, allowing older laptop models to use it.

In our lab tests, we found it to be surprisingly fast for a USB drive. The 1GB copy test finished in 44 seconds –



LaCie Starck Mobile Hard Drive

LaCie, www.lacie.com/au

Pros Good copy and duplication speeds; clever design.

Cons Heavy for a portable drive.

RRP \$139 (320GB); \$199 (500GB)



The speed, universality, toughness, and Mac-ready features of the drive make it highly recommendable.”

Assistant started up and asked how I would like to format the drive. I clicked on Mac and in seconds it was reformatted to Mac Journaled HFS and was therefore also Time Machine compatible. The drive also comes with the LaCie Mac utility Intego Backup Assistant for Mac.

The Starck Mobile features a 'curvilinear' aluminium flask design and an embedded USB cable about 15cm in length. Nestled cleverly in the back of the drive, the flexible rubber cable can be coiled back inside the drive for easy transport.

The 2mm of resistant aluminium casing ensures the drive feels sturdier than many portable drives, but unfortunately I found this extra armour made the drive feel much heavier than competing drives. It's still very portable, but you'll want to store the

a new lab record for a USB connection. The duplication test was also impressive, beating Western Digital's My Passport for Mac (1 minute and 15 seconds) and Buffalo's MiniStation TurboUSB Portable Hard Drive (1 minute and 14 seconds).

These times are not only impressive for a USB connection, but also make the Starck competitive with some FireWire 800 drives.


However, the drive came back to earth a bit in our low-memory Photoshop tests, finishing consistently at around 1 minute and 40 seconds, a full 10 seconds off the My Passport's time. The complicated regime of smaller tests that comprises this trial often means that the drive isn't meant to handle multiple processes.

The Starck Mobile is available in 320GB and 500GB capacities, priced

at \$139 and \$199 respectively. Both are comparatively inexpensive compared to competing USB-only drives.

The model we tested used a Samsung HM320II hard drive with a 5400 rpm mechanism, though LaCie says this may change. Perhaps due to the low-rpm and thick exterior shell, it ran cool and comparatively quiet.

Australian Macworld's buying

advice. I've yet to handle a mobile drive that feels as tough as the LaCie Starck Mobile. Additionally, its copy and duplication tests are very, very impressive. The speed, universality, toughness, and Mac-ready features of the drive make it highly recommendable to those with moderate to medium storage needs. 

— CHRIS HOLT

Reunion 9

PICA Australia, www.pica.com.au

Pros Comprehensive tools

Cons None of concern

RRP \$189.95



Trees, and branches, too

The genealogy application Reunion 9 is essentially a database program, but a very well-built database, complete with, as far as I can tell, every tool you might need for creating your family tree.

That it is so comprehensive should come as no surprise. It's a very mature product, with the developer boasting that Reunion has been the highest-rated family tree software for 18 years. Having a vague recollection of pre-OS 9 versions being well reviewed, I don't doubt it.

The interface is snappy, with a very OS X-style layout, though it still looks very Hypercard-like.

New features in version 9 include Snow Leopard compatibility; a "Treetops" button to list the earliest known ancestors for a given person; integration with an iPhone or iPod touch, in which editing can be done while mobile and subsequently used to update the desktop software; improved search tools, including the ability to find a citation detail; and enhancements to indexing and list options.

This is clearly a tool for the professional genealogical researcher, as it offers the ability to maintain records of multiple families. For the user who simply wants to compile basic data on a few generations of their own family, Reunion 9 might be overkill. A configurable, lightweight database application such as Bento might be a better option.

However, Reunion 9 has an excellent electronic manual and online support for those who want to tackle this software and come to grips with the myriad esoterica that go with genealogy research.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. It's hard to imagine a more comprehensive family tree database software than Reunion 9. It could do with providing more in the way of guidance for finding and using online sources of genealogical information but, that said, this software offers the whole box and dice when it comes to creating, maintaining and sharing a family tree. 🍷

— CHRIS OATEN

Nice touch

HP printer lives up to the hype.

A lot of fanfare preceded the release of this printer, with HP describing this new Photosmart-badged printer as having a 'breakthrough' Touchsmart-based user interface known as the HP Magic Frame.

For once, the hype lived up to expectations. Printer set-up was a snap, with on-screen instructions, even how-to animations, making it easy to throw away the paper instructions. Getting the printer connected to my home Wi-Fi was also a snap and, as with my now three-year-old HP PSC 2510, the C309 did not once drop the connection. Rock solid Wi-Fi, and no cable ever seemed necessary.

HP's iPhone app, HP iPrint, found the C309 on the network easily and the iPhone and printer worked together as if they'd been hard-wired. If you don't have Wi-Fi, the C309 has Bluetooth for wireless printing.

The C309 can take advantage of your Wi-Fi (or Ethernet) to connect to HP's online photo service, Snapfish, to use the full range of services there. With built-in card readers (SD, XD, MS and Duo but no CompactFlash), you can upload to Snapfish to order a range of photo products.

Another feature is a set of printable forms – graph paper, music sheets, even Sudoku games.

Throughout all of my time using the C309, the touchscreen was a joy to

use. Indeed, the best I've yet used in a printer in this category. Fun, even.

But what about the prints? Better than average to very good, but the five-colour inks (black, photo-black, cyan, magenta and yellow) are not nearly up to par with a six or eight-tank inkjet printer, with bold colours handling well but photo prints looking a bit flat in images with delicate tonal values.

Also of concern was the print yield. On a full set of new tanks, I printed 27 A4 prints before the cyan tank gave out. Printed at best quality on HP's Everyday photo paper, those 27 prints cost about \$2.80 each.

However, for more common printing tasks – text and simple graphics – the C309 performed brilliantly, with duplex printing adding further appeal. A two-sided page of text at normal quality printed in 21 seconds, excluding the pause before duplexing to allow for ink drying.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. If ease of use, versatility and reliability count high among your expectations, the C309 should make you pretty happy. One of the best A4 all-in-ones I've seen from HP. 🍷

— CHRIS OATEN

HP Photosmart C309

HP, www.hp.com.au

Pros Touchscreen controls

Cons High cost per print

RRP \$299



Travelling light

Microsoft puts its keyboard on a diet.

Microsoft's Bluetooth Mobile Keyboard 6000 is like Apple's Wireless Keyboard in that both keyboards are compact, both have low profiles, and both use Bluetooth. The Keyboard 6000 is a good keyboard for packing in a backpack or suitcase, but you'll have to make a few adjustments when using it on a Mac.

Measuring 36cm wide and 16.5cm deep, the Keyboard 6000 is quite a bit bigger than the 28cm-by-13.5cm Apple Wireless Keyboard. But the Keyboard 6000 doesn't rise up as much as the Apple one – the top of the Keyboard 6000 rises a barely-noticeable 1.3cm, while the Apple Wireless Keyboard rises 1.9cm.

The near flatness of the Keyboard 6000 makes it easy to stash; it fits nicely with my 15in MacBook Pro in my backpack's laptop compartment.

The low profile didn't bother me while typing, but if you need a higher angle, you'll need to use something to prop the Keyboard 6000 up – it has no way to adjust the height.

The Keyboard 6000 has what Microsoft calls the Comfort Curve that puts the keys at a better, more natural angle for your hands. It takes some time to adjust to the Keyboard 6000's curve, especially if you're used to straight keyboards like the Apple Wireless Keyboard. I liked the feel of the Keyboard 6000; it has a lot more spring than Apple's keyboard, which makes my fingers sore.

The most annoying aspect of the Keyboard 6000 is the inability to customise the keys. Microsoft doesn't include any Mac software, and the downloadable Microsoft IntelliType Pro software didn't work with the Keyboard 6000.

It doesn't have a Command key; there are Alt keys where Mac users are used to having Command keys,



Bluetooth Mobile Keyboard 6000

Microsoft, www.microsoft.com.au

Pros Thin profile; lightweight

Cons Windows key that acts as Command key on a Mac not in usual location for Mac users by default; doesn't immediately reconnect when waking from sleep; doesn't support some functionality found on Apple keyboards; can't customise keys.

RRP \$149.95



and there's a Windows key to the left of the Alt key on the left side of the keyboard. By default on the Keyboard 6000, the Windows key acts as the Command key. But you can change this in the Keyboard system preference.

When using the Keyboard 6000, the F-keys at the top of the keyboard support the F-key functions of the OS. You no longer have the ability to make adjustments for screen brightness or keyboard backlighting on the MacBook Pro.

The Keyboard 6000 has volume keys and a mute key on the upper


The most annoying aspect of the Keyboard 6000 is the inability to customise the keys."

right. There's a Delete key under the mute key and next to the Backspace key; under the Delete key is a Page Up key, which is next to Enter. I often pressed the Delete key when I wanted to press the Backspace key, and the Page Up key when I wanted to press the Enter key – frustrating, to say the least.

The Keyboard 6000 comes with a keypad, which is handy for data entry. Interestingly, Microsoft includes a protective cloth pouch for the keypad, but not one for the keyboard.

The Keyboard 6000 uses Bluetooth, and if you have a Bluetooth built in to your Mac, you don't have to plug a transmitter into a USB port like you would with an RF device. However, it takes several seconds for the keyboard and keypad to reconnect after idle.

Australian Macworld's buying advice.

The Bluetooth Mobile Keyboard 6000's thinness and light weight make it ideal for travel, but it's a basic keyboard that will require you adjust to its design and layout. 

— ROMAN LOYOLA

Working with FileMaker

Hands-on experience shows benefits of v.10

To Mac veterans FileMaker seems to have always been around. And it has. It began its life as a DOS product and was GUI-ed for the Mac platform before the release of the Mac Plus in 1985.

Shortly thereafter Apple created Claris, a wholly owned subsidiary, as a conduit for FileMaker and its other software. FileMaker Pro was first released in 1990 and the Windows version appeared in 1992.

In 1998 Claris became FileMaker Inc. and development continued through various iterations, adding plug-in architecture, increasing scripting powers and relational capabilities until the latest version, FileMaker 10 was released last year.

This is the most serious update since FileMaker Pro 7 and features a streamlined user interface. Throughout all these changes FileMaker has retained its characteristic ease-of-use.

Today I am using FileMaker 10 with its gorgeous new look.

As archivist at a large Melbourne secondary college one of my main tasks is to build simple databases for student and adult volunteers,

some with little computer knowledge. They then use these to catalogue, separately, heritage objects, photographs, school magazines, donated collections, DVDs, videotapes, audio cassettes and school council records.

Before my arrival the school had used Microsoft Access to database student records. These had subsequently been ported to DB/TextWorks, which is standard cataloguing software in many libraries and large museums.

At over \$2000 TextWorks is way more expensive than FileMaker and there is no Mac version. It's a very powerful program but overkill for our more modest needs. It also requires some degree of expertise to set up and is not particularly transparent to use, which is critical for our volunteers.

And so we looked at the pros and cons of switching to FileMaker. Currently the student records are still being entered in TextWorks but all other catalogues are FileMaker-based. I have been able to import the TextWorks records into FileMaker and I expect ultimately that all our archival cataloguing will be on FileMaker.

Each database has been quickly created from a common template I designed and many have been modified on-the-fly in response to volunteers' requests for changes.

Image fields are very helpful in identifying objects and documents. The ability to use a reference to the image file rather than the image itself also keeps the file size under control.

Both adult and student volunteers find the databases easy to use and applaud the spacious layout,

Volunteers find the databases easy to use and applaud the spacious layout, pulldown menus and especially the attractive interface of version 10."



FileMaker 10

FileMaker, www.filemaker.com.au

Pros Mature; stable; intuitive; cross-platform; legendary ease of use improved even further in v.10

Cons None really, except that as a professional software package there is a lot to learn.

RRP from \$453.64



pulldown menus and especially the attractive interface of version 10.

Another killer feature in version 10 is the ability to create databases from existing Excel files. One volunteer has painstakingly catalogued the school's musical collection as an Excel spreadsheet. I converted his considerable body of work into a FileMaker database in a few minutes.

There are many other powerful features, particularly scripting and relational features, that we are not making use of. But one day we may, and it is comforting to know they will be there when we need them. ☺

— KEITH WHITE



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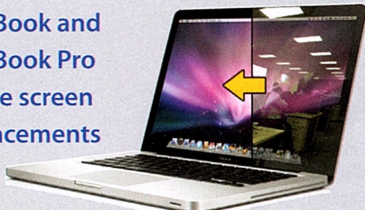
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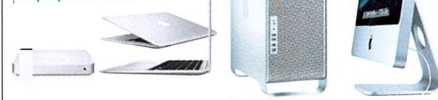
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ONE MORE THING...

Approving the approver

If you follow the mainstream tech media you will have noticed a theme that keeps recurring. It's to do with Apple's sometimes ridiculous rejection of apps for reasons, that are at best nonsensical and at worst just random. Through the App Store's first year Apps have been rejected for everything from swear words to icons.

The App Store has many benefits for consumers; it's THE one-stop shop to view, download and update apps on the iPhone. For most users the process is seamless. So seamless in fact that the rest of the smartphone industry has stolen Apple's concept.

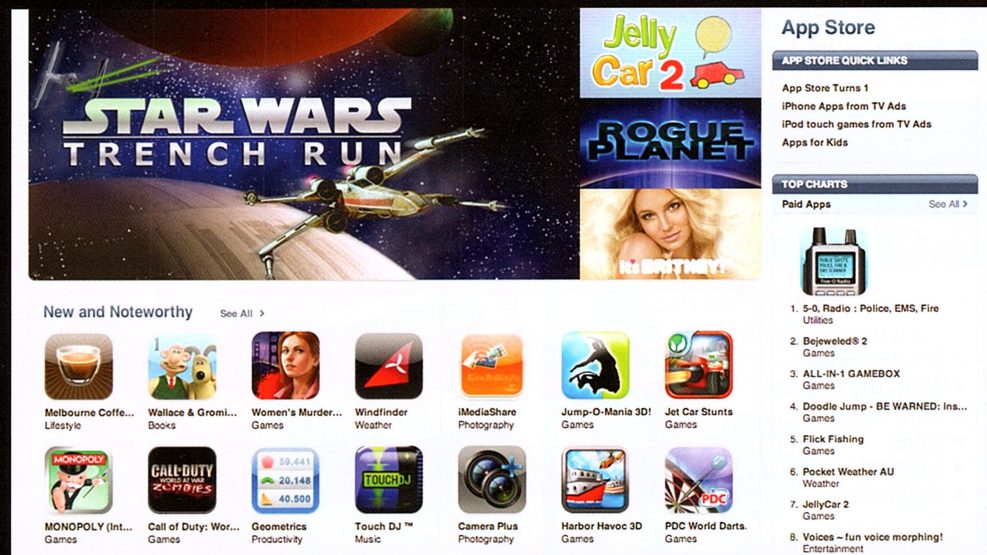
With over 100,000 apps, the App Store isn't slowing down, but cracks are beginning to emerge around the corners – mostly to do with the way Apple treats its developers.

Like in all cases there are two sides to every story. I recently discussed the App Store with a local developer who had nothing but praise for it. Apple set his expectations correctly, he followed the process, and within 14 days his App was live in the store.

He did note that contacting Apple or asking for help was a slow, painful process. On balance, however, he said he'd continue developing for the platform as he saw it had more potential than others, and the development tools and processes were the best available.

Contrast this reaction with the one from Joe Hewitt, developer of the popular Facebook app for iPhone.

In an interview with TechCrunch Hewitt said, "My decision to stop iPhone development has had everything to do with Apple's policies. I respect their right to manage their



With Apple approving all apps in the store it is a powerful gatekeeper."

platform however they want, but I am philosophically opposed to the existence of their review process. I am very concerned that ... soon gatekeepers will start infesting the lives of every software developer."

Control is central to the debate. With Apple approving all apps in the store it is a powerful gatekeeper. Apple reasons that the tight controls improve the quality of the apps in the store, and contribute to a better experience. This is true, as iPhones continue to sell at a healthy rate.

However, if developers don't feel good about developing apps, long-term the platform can't continue to be successful. I often wonder whether the iPhone platform would be just as successful (if not more) if Apple scrapped the review process entirely. Apart from the occasional app that crashes there probably wouldn't be any difference.

If Apple is going to maintain this level of control perhaps it could think about creating an 'uncensored' area in the App Store. Consumers could be educated that apps available in this section were untested and unreviewed, a type of 'R' rating. From a safety perspective these apps could still be vetted for authentication, support, etc, but the actual content they use, display, and their purpose would be unrestricted.

Luckily Apple's competition is finally up and running. Android looks to be the most obvious runner-up to the iPhone, and one of the strengths of the Android platform is the openness allowed to the community – developers and users alike. Hopefully this competition is enough to show Apple that a successful marketplace can flourish on its own without the need to mollycoddle each app, one at a time.

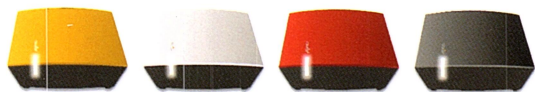
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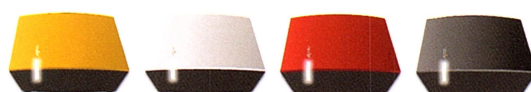
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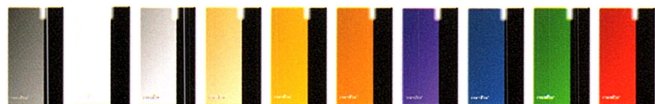
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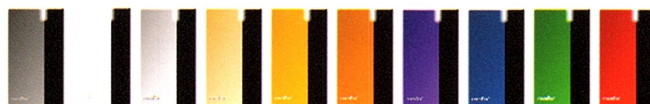
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